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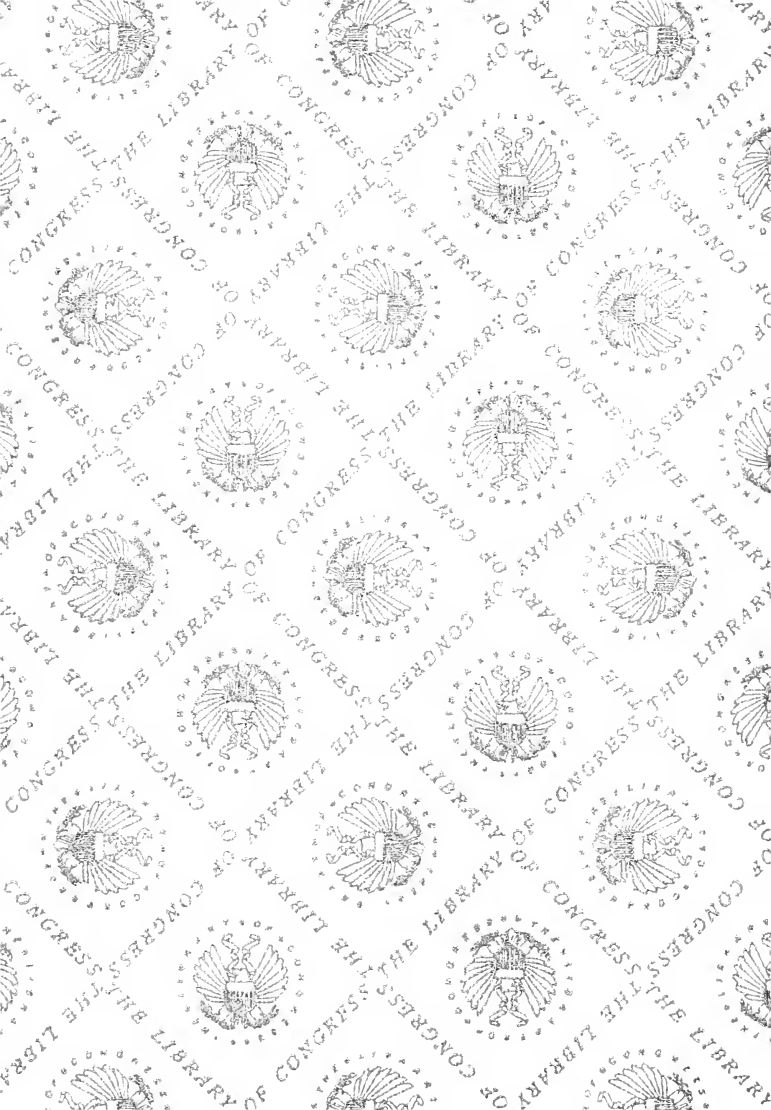
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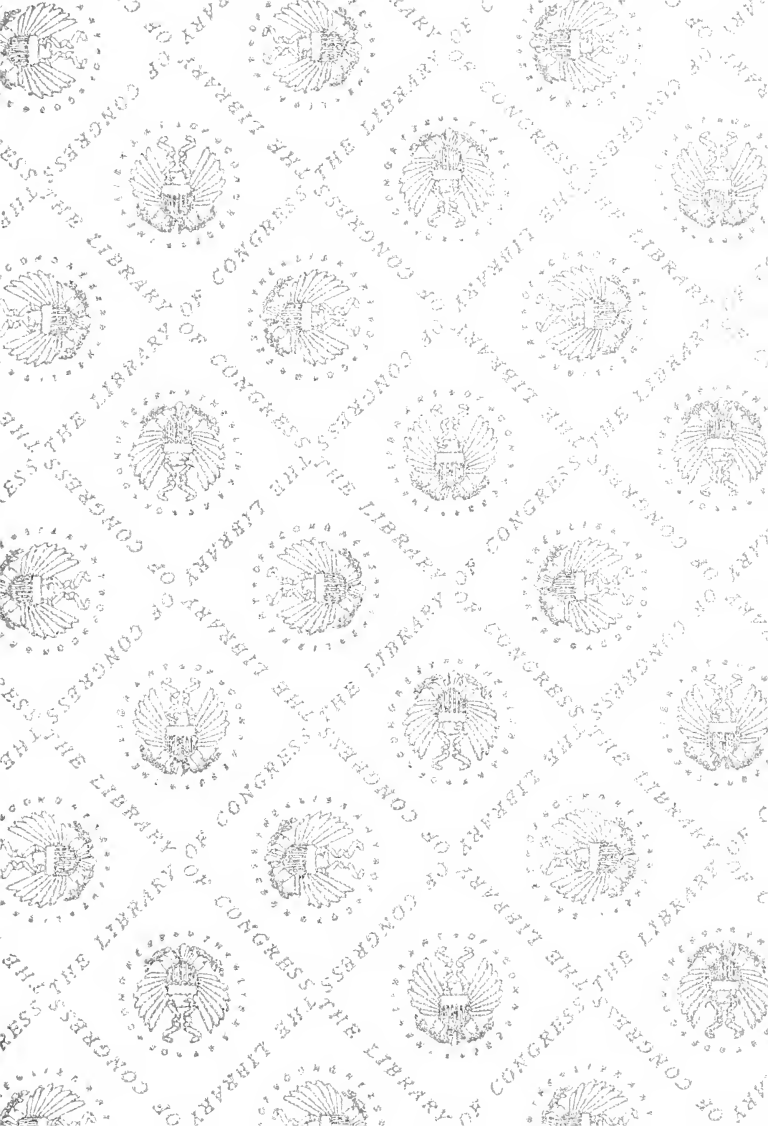
1903

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A D R A M A

IN FOUR ACTS

ENTITLED

A U G U S T A

BY

J. VINTON WEBSTER

AUTHOR OF

AUGUSTA DANE

THE NAMELESS HERO

GROVER THE FIRST

THE HERMIT'S HOME

AND OTHER STORIES

SAN FRANCISCO :

THE HINTON PRINTING CO., 516 COMMERCIAL ST.

1903

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CAS' OF AUGUSTA

Judge Dane.....	Superior Judge
Winton	Husband of Augusta
Tom Smith.....	Friend of the Dame family
Elic	Son of Judge Dane
Hugh Berring..	Saloon-keeper and politician of Virginia City
Mark Twain.....	Writer and humorist
Lo Loreno.....	Indian murderer
Jerry Jessup.....	
Will Sidden.....	Friends from Kentucky
Judge Blake.....	Friend and counselor of the Jessups
Abram Curry.....	Penitentiary Superintendent, Carson City
Happy Jack.....	Stage Driver and friend of Berring
Major Wasson.....	Wit and friend of Mark Twain
Jack Pot.....	Gambler, Virginia City
Sing	Roustabout and dishwasher, Carson Prison
Pat Mooney.....	Carson Prison Steward
Doctor Duff.....	Prison Surgeon
Mrs. Dane.....	wife of Judge Dane
Augusta	daughter of Mrs. Dane
Helen Jessup.....	sister of Jerry and betrothed of Will Sidden
Mrs. Alcesta.....	a busybody
Mrs. Summerville.....	a cholera patient
Mrs. Sneider.....	friend of Berring
Lena	assistant cook, Carson Prison
Musicians, dancers, officers, prisoners, etc.	

AUGUSTA

A D R A M A

IN FOUR ACTS

ACT I.

Scene 1, Town of Alameda. Old Wharf Road, Oakland
in Distance.

Enter Winton, excited.

Help! help! for the love of heaven help!

Enter Smith.

What's the matter, man;

That makes you split the air

With that shrill yell of yours?

Winton—Hello, Tom ; you come
As fortune in the nick of time and as
A friend and wisher for the best, I beg
Your aid in rescue of my fancy rig
And fair Augusta, ere the rising tide
Does sweep them out to sea.

Smith—Where is the danger?

Winton—Yonder ; on the road

Smith—What strain or mishap caused the ill?

Winton—That dark-eyed maiden caused it all ;
For months I've paid her court most lavishly
But scarce impression made, and so to trim
And decorate my love with glint and style
I faced the random risk of losing my
Equipage, bright and new from Hawley's,
And that fine span of spanking bays, bred on
The blue grass meadows of Kentucky ;
All of which I fear are lost to me.

Smith—How came they in the flood?

Winton—Well, you see, I sped along the road
That thwarts the eye of Oakland.
Down to the wharf, with neck and neck of two
And forty ; turning there with graceful curve
That bulged the eyes of all the passengers.
Received the sweet Augusta with a bow

And smile; then yanked myself beside her
 Ribbons taut and bit cigar between
 My teeth and head abaft, we sailed in state
 Along the heaved up streak of spongy bog—
 When suddenly the horses shied to left,
 As startled by a ponderous gull, dead white,
 Big throated, squalking as he went.
 And thus alarmed, as if the Devil stood
 Upon the track, the team swished sidewise down
 Into the murky tide, just reaching flood.
 At this my hair stood up like bristles on
 A cornered hog, bayed by a pack of dogs.
 My teeth did chatter as the rattle of
 A saw in running through a hickory knot;
 While ague fits possessed me like as do
 The callow huntsmen shooting at a deer.
 Augusta, seeing my unseemly plight,
 Drew firmly from my hands the slackened rein.
 At this I edged out in the flood knee deep
 And started on the run for help—
 Confound the luck! just see my pants—my boots
 Are ruined with the slush. And all because
 I dared to risk a danger for a woman.

Smith—Where is the girl?

Winton—Down in the running tide
 Behold her holding fast those flound'ring steeds,
 Like Andromeda doomed by Juno.

Smith—May the Devil take you for

An escort, ere another ride is yours
 With beauty brave and highly bred—
 But come, ceracious champion!
 The peril thickens round that fair young form—
 I'd wade a thousand tides, with all the mud.
 Of forty fords for such a hand as hers.

Exit Smith and Winton. Enter Mrs. Dane and Son.

Mrs. Dane—I fear mishap
 Hath befallen to Augusta.
 The ferryboat hath been an hour gone
 And she not yet in sight.
 Go, my son, along the hoglash to
 The wharf and see what ails the missing girl.

Elic—I guess she's ran away with Winton, mother,
 For I seen the caud, with spanking team,
 Tear by the house, just like a rattled loon
 Full-fledged and making for the tide.

Mrs. Dane—Curb your jarring tongue, my son.
 And leg it to the wharf in haste.

Exit.

Enter Smith, Augusta and Winton.

Winton—This is a happy rescue, Smith,
 And grateful to you am I for it
 With Augusta as endorser.
 Her dress, just see, perhaps her feet are wet.
 Surely she is nerve strung to the bone
 And would a hero be with breeches on.

Augusta—The sorry plight my dress is in is of
 No consequence, but rather is it pique
 At this uncanny incident.
 Surely, Mr. Smith, I owe you thanks
 For timely aid in this affair, and shall
 Be pleased to see you at my father's house.
 The pretty words of Mr. Winton I
 Will dry for kindling wood and lay up in
 My memory, for future use when I
 Can eke return of compliment.

Exii Winton and Augusta.

Smith—Well, that does beat a Hindoo farce
 Unknown to blood and thunder;
 Rather than unstring my joints
 Like that poor chouse, and ape a baby
 Wearing swaddling clothes, I'd surely ride
 My shadow to its grave, and with contrition
 Hari kari out my little soul
 For Devil broth, or port it in the boat
 Of silent Charon to the ugly jaws
 Of triple-headed Cerberus.
 The wonder is so many fools can live
 Upon the earth without a grain of guidance
 Bottomed on conceptions sane.
 A loon that's lost its little wit could cut
 The caper better, shaming all the breed
 Of imbeciles that claim the counterpart of God.
 His thrust at me that I have never been

In love, is like a breakfast hash, with more
 Of hair and hide than wholesome meat.
 Oh, yes; I've been in love, but since my suit
 Was dubious from start to finish, I
 Had sense enough to let the jewel go
 When she refused to marry me, and then
 My recompense is this: she's wedded to
 My rival, who with fermentations of
 A brewer's vat, is begging me to help him rid of her
 By planning an elopement, promising
 Full half his wealth to me, with latitude
 A matchless match can make it so.
 But then, I will not thus decree my fate
 To one so fatal in her make-up.

Exit.

Act 1. Scene 2, Judge Dane's Parlor.

Enter Winton.

Winton—The home of my sweet charmer!
 How I love the ground on which she treads!
 Not for the virtue in the rotten earth
 But for the impress of her footprints on it.
 The opportune has come; my nerves must brace
 Me for this chase, and from the sunny fields
 And verdant meadows of my hopes must house
 The fragrant hay, ere frost or chilling rain
 May intervene to injure it.

Enter Augusta.

Winton—My dear Augusta, may I beg of you
Indulgence for a word, most urgently
Demanding audience?

Augusta—If this gem of thought does worry you
So much in seeking utterance, perhaps
It is as well to give deliverance and let
The darling die or live as best it can.

Winton—Pray, my dear withhold your rasping saws
And sentimental scrapers, ere I have
Divulged the purport of my speech.

Augusta—Then make an end of all this labored breath
And clothe the thing in raiment more befitting.

Winton—Then I will say I am in love with you,
Augusta, all the way from toes to tip
Of flowers in your hair—stay! no offense
I hope, and though return for it may be
With you as light as an abas in pearls
Uncut, I will with care convey it to
A lapidary skillful in his art,
And beg of him to give it lustre such
As shall outshine the morning star.

Augusta—If you can form a star out of a hope
So frail, its manufacture set about;
But do not edge upon enchanted ground

That's full of blowholes surely dangerous.
 So kedge your woo and wind the cable up
 That gives it undue latitude.
 A lark that sings to win a linnet from
 Its parent nest is doubtful victory.

Winton—But if the lark can give the linnet
 Better house and sweeter nest, why should
 The linnet rail against the change?

Augusta—Gilded halls and divans rich
 No mortgage hold on happiness, and oft
 The thatch-roofed tenement contains more cheer
 And rondeau lines than domiciles of ease
 Where luxury does wear its gilded toggery
 And surfeits on its idleness.
 Life hath duties stern, and he
 Who feeleth not the yoke that urges him
 To carry something of his brother's load
 Is drawing to the day of retribution,
 Which God imposes through contrition in
 Another world.

Winton—And so the split-hoofed idler
 With rasping word, who takes no heed of ills
 That others bear, is but as rubbish of
 The world and worthy only of the gibes
 The footpad warbles from his throat.

Augusta—The gist of my contention is
 That toil in avenues that help us all

To human betterment, hath anchor hold
 In God's ordaining, while the idler
 In poverty or rolling wealth, who hath
 No higher aim in life than selfish ends,
 Does cumber standing ground, ungainly strutting
 And unsung to his distempered grave.

Winton—By all the virgins blest,
 You seem a stranger to your single self,
 With frosty words that chatter all my teeth;
 Your parents wish this union, why delay
 The word that will complete my happiness?

Augusta—The reason why I love you not;
 To wed a man I do not love would breed
 A rancor in my heart, to fester in
 Your strong embrace and chill my life
 As does a granite wall the myrtle
 Growing north of it.

Winton—O fie on such a badden thought;
 I wish your answer, yes or no,
 Just say the word and then I'll go.

Augusta—Then go. The berries on this bush of love
 Are green and puckered, sour to the taste,
 To pluck them now would give the colic sure,
 Beyond the cure of sage or catnip tea.

Exit Winton. Enter Mrs. Dane.

Mrs. Dane—How now, Augusta?
 Mr. Winton's left the house huffed to

The brows, with face as red as snapper on
A gobbler's snoop.

Enter Judge Dane.

Judge Dane—How's this, good brotonoid?
The night's a berring passes on beyond
Its dark equator, you seem in truth
To be unmindful that the morning star
Is climbing up the Orient, and like
A wandering seraph smiles upon the world.
What keeps your inner chamber empty of
A lovely form?

Mrs. Dane—Compliments aside
Though sweet Acarner shines not brighter than
Your wits, my business here is knowledge why
Our protege left the house a moment since
With flaming face and mien that augured not
His soon return.

Judge Dane—Speak, Augusta, ere fair Venus rings
The sable curtain up that ushers in
Another day, and bids the sun unfold
The glory of his coming.

Augusta--I have, my father, not a word to say
That's worth your time in hearing it.
Nothing surely have I said to give
Offense to any man of sense; a cub
Or skittish kitten; simply have I told
The cole, that if I knew my heart it had
So far been used but as a pump of life,

And manufacture cheer and sympathy
 For those of kin.
 That Cupid's darts were stranger to my blood
 Save when, with pranks, he flitted by my face
 As Morpheus held me in his embrace,
 And that his suit was like the bridle for
 A colt that never had been bitted for
 A ride, and that my mind was firmly set
 On duty here at home and search for lore
 To broaden out my brains.

Judge Dane—You speak in riddles, girl,
 Like one who has unsteady lodgment on
 A hade, with dress of hackel words, obscure
 And dim of sense.
 You'll stay at home on duty bent, is it?
 Well, then, what is the duty of a child
 In midway teens but to obey and do
 As bid by sire and gentle alma?
 We must presume to judge in this affair,
 Which much concerns us all, and you
 Should cut in twain this caprice
 Coddled in the mind about those evanescent
 Dreams of love that lives in thatch-roof
 Cots, or begs in squalor on the streets.
 Lay off this stale romance of former age,
 When sonnet did charm a foolish peasantry,
 And knighthood, dressed in breechclouts,

Rode on fiery steeds into the thickest
Fight, that valor might a buxom
Beauty win, bedecked in skins about
The waist, with breast and shinbones
Brown and bare and shoeless feet
All sprawling at the toes.

This is an age of sterner stuff, and he
Who sows the wind must reap where
Nothing grows, unless it's gleanings of
Another's field.

Utility is shrouding for the grave
All sentiment, and those who hold
The pursestrings of the world own all
Things else. Virtue offers tribute there
And manhood, once so common in this
Land, holds out its pleading hand for
Dole of work or stinted substance.

The flood-tide in each life is when
The current runs his way, and he who
Lingers by the flowing stream in haggle
For the start, has lost his opportunity.
Much more's the fear for womanhood.

She must accommodate the time in which
She lives. She is a plaything in the hands
Of ruthless fate, without discretion in
Affairs of childish love, when chance does offer
Opportunity to marry well.

What will you do in this affair?

Speak plainly, here and now,

Augusta—My noble father, surely would
I not in aught offend against your will,
Obedient in all things my aim in life
Has ever been to serve my home and those
In duty bound I am to serve,
Withhold not then, I do implore,
A daughter's right to choose, or not
To choose, as seemeth best to her in
All affairs relating to the heart.
Your counsel, always wise, I will admit,
But this concern of yours concerns me
Most, and all mistakes of act are at
My cost.

Judge Dane—Fie on you, girl!
Abjure this fake of yours! Know
Thou, success in every line of life
Succeeds by dint of wit, dovetailed about
With policy, deep seated in the mind.
Fortune, fickle ever, seemeth most
Secure when sitting at the feet of him
Who favors most his own.
The talisman that leads to gilded halls
Is cunning brains distilled in selfishness,
Wherein all softer sentiment eats up
Its self, as does an eel in hunger
Gulp its tail.

Augusta—Presume I not to say that judgment
Is profound in thee, my father;

But then how can I see so high above
My head?

How can a glowworm wear a lion's mane?
Or lily bloom above the tallest pines?
God fixed the measure of each thing's
Estate to fill its mission in its given
Sphere. So each should not reproach
The other for its moods, environed as it is
For good or ill, and naught can
Make it otherwise.

I am a woman, have a woman's ways;
Though frail she is and given to conceits
Her life is love, and she who loves the
Most in all things pure and sweet does
Live in truth the nearest God's design.
So it seems to me that no one has
The right to sear her heart with ulcers
Bred by stopping up its portals in a
Match that soul and sense abhor.

Judge Dane—Ah! well do I observe
That you can summarize as well as spin.
Perhaps I am unduly anxious in this
Smudge for gain and will not press
The matter further in this morning
Measure of the night. So take more council
With yourself. Educate your wits to view
Unbiased stern utility, that holds humanity
In the hollow of its hand, and be not

Stiff and willful to a selfish end that
 May embarrass all my future plans.
 Good night and may the morning bring
 You better council.

Exit all.

Act 1, Scene 2. A Street Scene.

Enter Winton and Smith (Winton prancing about).

Smith—Where get you all this supple
 Marrow man, that does outdo the
 Shindigs of a crazy loon?

Winton Verily it may be so.
 Hardly snug can I contain myself.
 The hills are green with hope again,
 And light breaks on my soul like some
 Bright summer day injected at
 The winter solstice.

Smith—How so?

Winton—Did you ever see the corn in bloom
 At Christmas, or the crocus bell break through
 The drifting snows before the vernal
 Equinox began to think of spring?
 Thus seems it now with me. Ambrosia
 Grows apace; the linden buds, the lilies bloom,
 And stern old Boreas bears the ugly night
 Of death into the frozen world, and hangs

The horror splintered on the northern pole.

Smith—Lord save the mark!

In pity hold this chant to smug
Your temper on a rainy day, and give
Me pith of what you're shying at.

Winton—What am I shying at
Say, good friend, I'll wager my roan horse
Against two little pigeon toes that you
Have never been in love in all your life,
Unless it was with leaks and onions,
Peppered with your spicy temper.
Well, then, to brief it for your sake,
Will say, Augusta, queen of manly hearts—
No fairer in the land—I've looped with my
Existence as a mate to run the race
Of life for stakes my father holds.
Fortune is a shining charmer in
A fickle world, and he who catches her
Should be content with self and all things else,
For surely he has seized the forelock of
His opportunity!
Yea, Gods in ecstasy, all working on
The remnants of the world could not produce
Another such as she!
Her words fall like the harmony
Of some old song—remembered since
The world was young.

Pray, Smith, go hug yourself till breath
Comes back to me again.

Smith—With what uncommon skill of magic did
You use to baffle common sense and beat
The necromancer in a race for love,
Without a leg to run upon?

Winton—How did I win her?
Ask these whispering oaks,
They know the story all by heart.
For once they were as young as we and were
In love with sentiment, so here have stood
With open ears for centuries and heard
The simple swain and maiden stories, long
Forgotten, save by them and moving ticks
That sing their requiem forever here.
But to be a little more precise
I'll give a hint of how the thing is did,
So you, perhaps, may profit by the line
When Cupid finds you in a melting mood.
'Tis this. If you would ever surely win
A maiden, woo her mother first and as
You go blaze well the way to minds and hearts
Utilitarian by show in hand
Of substance rich or which comes by quick
Inheritance, for money in this world
Does take more tricks in gambling of this kind
Than cooing with the tender plant of love.

These elder people once had sent'ment,
 Perhaps in Cupid's hands entrusted,
 But lengthy steep in life's realities
 Doth brave the strength the little god contains
 And sets the heart on something more secure.
 My father's rich! That is the shining tail
 That wags all worldly dogs and surely finds
 A woman primping much to catch the cade
 For pith of every daughter's dower.
 And so another moon with all its change
 And fickleness, will hardly shine and wane
 Again before I call her legally
 My own, when like the droning bee that sips
 The dreamy sweets of rose or poppy bloom,
 I'll while away the fleeting hours.

Exit.

Enter Augusta.

Augusta.—Well,
 It seems I'm to be a victim to
 That monster bred in Hades, having aims
 No higher than the dross and glum of cold utility.
 O sweet heaven! couldst thou straighten out
 The crooks and warps that puny pride and greed
 Have seared with shame and wrinkled on the world's
 Affairs, and let simplicity and love
 Of right prevail again, God's work
 In man's uplifting would be manifest.

The life environed that a woman leads
 Does often turn to gall the impulse of
 Her bleeding heart and makes a mockery
 Of marriage worse than bonds of precedent
 That in some tribes yet bear her trembling form
 To breathe its last, and, black with suffocation,
 Moulder in the rotten earth beside
 A tyrant dead.

Perhaps it may be for the best, who knows?
 So frail are we in judgment that the sage
 Is often short in demonstration of
 A single truth. So we tramp the path
 Of all the millions passed without a guide
 To point the way that each should surely go,
 Poor, puny man! And yet is full of pride!
 Ah, well! there seems no other route for me
 Than that my austere father has prescribed.
 May scanty hope and time but ease the pain
 Of this great sacrifice, for hope is all
 There is of daylight in this world of mental gloom
 That shadows all the landscape of my life;
 Surely there is recompense for duty
 Well performed, else heaven is a myth
 And virtue but a passing dream.
 The benefit of doubt in this affair
 I'll give my counselor and yield to him
 My callow judgment, but whatever else
 May fail me in this tribulation

Truth and duty, ever foremost in
 The best resolves, shall be the pole star of
 My destiny, as follows forth the trusting
 Mariner the bearings of his steadfast
 Compass, however rough the surging seas
 With troubled waters.

Act I, Scene 4. Room in Judge Dane's House.

Enter Winton and Augusta.

Winton—Like some silurian of
 The under world with light and shadow mixed,
 The earth, with oscillating dips and turns,
 Has doubled round the sun two several times
 Since first we knew the bliss of wedded life.
 So far so good,
 But then the world is not quite all a dream.
 The rasping sear of dull, cold facts intrude
 Continually their ugly faces,
 And mix the sweet and wormwood so together
 That life does hold the scale of good and ill
 About in even balance.
 But be this as it may,
 With shay and spavined horses we
 Have rolled the dusty road that seems to link
 Like umbil cord our father homes, until
 The stay is doubtful welcome to us both.
 So I must turn another leaf in life's
 Erratic volume, ere it be too late

To keep the company of self-respect ;
 And since my sire seems a little curt
 And indisposed to lax the taut upon
 His pursestrings aiding in my betterment
 I see no other way along this rough
 And flinty track than taking up the cinch
 And riding stride myself.
 And since there seems no other route to better
 This predicament, I have resolved
 To take a tramp across the cloud-bound snows
 That hedge us from that wonderland where all
 The hills are ribbed with shining ore and laked
 About with slumps of puddled silver.

Augusta—Emergencies make men, sometimes
 Of timber not selected from the best,
 So I concur in your resolve.

Enter Judge Dane and wife.

Judge Dane—Indulge us for this rash intrusion
 For I hear you do propose a journey
 To the wilds of Old Nevada, where
 Now centers much of worldly thought and hope
 Of gain beyond the shadow of a want.

Winton—True, indeed, I go,
 As one oppressed with weight of care for one
 So surely mine.
 The wolf is in the fold of my estate
 With teeth all set to chew the ragged end

Of nothing which is dowery from my sire.

Mrs. Dane—Your wealthy father might
Afford your land and stock and shelter for
A time, until by dint of care you could
Secure a competence.

Winton—Sweet mother of my ablative,
In all thy learning didst thou ever hear
Of the accipitrine, in science called
A chuck, a species of the marmot tribe,
And brought from Persia centuries since?
If not advised, please read up on this score
And you will comprehend the make-up of
The average man when he hath wealth
Beyond the normal lust of common need.

Mrs. Dane—And of Augusta, what becomes of her?

Winton—As with a lovely plant,
Full blown in some rare garden of the gods,
Untimely rooted up and robbed of all
Its fresher sweets, the chief concern shall be
For knock of my ability to make
Provision for her coming.
And in abeyance do I wish
To place your tender care about this gem
Of aromatic growth unused to storm
Or biting frost.

Mrs. Dane—Be it so. She is my blood
And what I have is hers, for mother is

The counterpart in name for love of those
She gave to life.

Judge Dane—Then speed you onward,
Hope we always good will come of it.

Winton—So, so. It's settled now. Good-bye to all,
And may I live forever green in your
Sweet memory, my dear Augusta. [Kisses her.]

Exit all.

(Song.)

I cannot love, for once I loved
A laddie in the mountains.
He lived where all the hills were groved
And waters flowed from fountains.
And on and on the streamlets ran
To join the brimming river—
Forever! O Forever!
And on and on the streamlets ran
To join the brimming river.

I told him that I loved him so
I never could another,
And wheresoever he should go
I wished to be his—mother.
And on and on the streamlets ran
To join the brimming river—
Forever! O Forever!
And on and on the streamlets ran
To join the brimming river.

He seemed the picture of despair
 And sought to soothe him lonely,
 When shook his head with saddest air
 And said he loved one only.
 And on and on the streamlets ran
 To join the brimming river—
 Forever! O Forever!
 And on and on the streamlets ran
 To join the brimming river.

So mourned he for one love long lost
 - And I for one consuming,
 And thus came chill and bitter frost
 When lilac buds were blooming.
 And on and on the streamlets ran
 To join the brimming river—
 Forever! O Forever!
 And on and on the streamlets ran
 To join the brimming river.

Act 1, Scene 5. Hotel Office, Sacramento.

Enter Augusta.

Augusta (to the Clerk)—Can you tell me
 Something of the route and company
 I will have in transit to Virginia City?

Clerk—The grades are steep,
 But not severe in rut and rock;

With curves and windings 'mid the hills and peaks
 And depths of God's great ababyrinths of pine
 And cedars planted there before the flood,
 Which speak of might and call to worship high
 Above the steepled church each passenger
 Who loveth nature in its majesty.
 As to your company, I cannot tell
 Except this gentleman who goes to-day—
 Mr. Berring, this is Mrs. Winton,
 On her way to Virginia City
 To meet her husband, who's residing there.
 A stranger to the route, she seeks to know
 Its difficulties and the company
 That stages it this morning.

Berring—Glad I am to meet you, Mrs. Winton,
 Your husband is a friend of mine,
 The journey is not difficult and on
 The way there are so many grand surprises
 Topped with God's magnificence that in
 Their view old Time forgets the counting of
 His lagging hours.
 Your company it does appear will be
 Indifferent. The iron-nerved
 And skillful driver, Charlie, holds the reins,
 So, the score is safe in that direction.
 I will be a passenger and beg
 The privilege to serve your smallest need.

Augusta—I think my needs will be a cipher, since

Provision ample's fully made and all
My baggage checked.

Exit Augusta.

Berring (to Clerk)—By jingo! she's a gem
All cut with setting golden. Not a flaw
Or break in all her make-up. Seemingly
A little cold and formal surely, but
I'll bet a keg of sparkling rye that ere
We reach Virginia City she will tame
A bit in her austerity.

Clerk—Be cautious, Fredy.
That man of hers may lay you out
In winding-sheets before you are aware
Of it, and of your stock in trade consume
The contents of a brandy barrel in
Preserving what is left of you.

Berring—I know the chappie well,
And have no fear of shot or shell
In his employ. Vanity does rock
Him in her cradle with a lullaby,
In which he dozes dreamily as does
A pig that's full of milk.

Act I, Scene 6. Cape Horn, Sierra Mountains.

Enter Two Robbers.

First Robber—Well, pal; how long

Have you followed the trade of road Agent?

Second Robber—Seven years.

First Robber—What induced this calling?

Second Robber—The Devil.

First Robber—How so?

Second Robber—By hedging me about
With conditions damaging.

First Robber—Fie on you man! Your
Trumpery answers nothing—wherein lies
The pith of your speech?

Second Robber—Well, my father did to his
Advantage kick the scuttle early. Mother
Was devoted, with a sister loving, who
Rustled for me, while the days passed as
So many dreams without a care for those
Who toiled that I might have repose.
Unhappily my mother died and sister
Spliced another man. Then sat I on the
Hollow of a log and whittled sticks
In cogitation of my lost supports.
And how to live a gentleman without
The grime of toil. My kin and friends
Did stake me for a time but soon they
Gave me shoulder colder than a clam.
Then hired out as clerk in Randolph's
Country store for board and clothes.

This drudgery and lack of means did grind
 Me to the quick and soured all my
 Better self.

The pressing need of money caused me
 Cinch the till, with hope that cunning
 Would avail against dishonesty.

But Nemesis followed me so closely
 That suspicion camped along my track,
 And finally pounced down upon my
 Robberies.

At this I skipped like antler hounded
 To the hills and took a cue as agent
 On the road. And you?

First Robber—Oh, my pedigree is
 Brief, and full of kinks.

I had no father and my mother
 Housed with chumps, whose only virtue
 Was in waiting opportunity to steal.

Thus environed, is there wonder that
 I graduated early, starting out
 As fortune hunter with a burglar's kit?

But why bemoan a lurid destiny?

We are as debris on a flooded stream
 That moves forever, with the current
 Leading, swinging round the eddies as we go
 To Erebus, or led by a thread to Lacheris—

But hold! The stage grinds round
 The Cape and opportunity is pricking

Up his ears, so hide we and await
 The issue. [Secrete themselves.]

Act 1, Scene 7. Mountain Pass. Enter stage with passengers. Two robbers appearing by the roadside.

First Robber—Hold your horses,
 Stranger, and throw us out the box
 Of boodle!

Stage Driver—'Tis light to-night
 And will not pay your plunder.

Robber—No mincing words but pungle,
 Or I'll bore you full of holes.

Stage Driver—All right, put up your
 Gun. More holes would make me less
 A man and may be measure me a box.
 Here is the wallet. Gorge all you can
 And take the consequences.

Second Robber (peering in the stage)—
 Who's in the dugout?

Berring—A lady and myself.

Robber—Then condescende to alight myself,
 And lady ditto.

Berring—You wouldn't harm a
 Lady, surely?

Robber—Mum, bind your chops, you

Skipjack, or else I'll go through
 You with dose of brimstone and metallic
 Salts, so get out double quick.
 And you, miss, madam, follow suit!

Augusta—For what reason shall I
 Leave the stage? If robbery is your
 Purpose, here's my purse and all
 I have of value.

Robber—The purpose is my own and
 Best it is that you obey my order!

(*Augusta* alights. *Robber* peers in her face.)
 By Garry! she's a duck of the first
 Water! Fit to be companion of an
 Agent most accomplished in his art,
 From railroad president up to those
 Who live more leisurely among the hills.
 A kiss I crave just now, and more
 Substantials afterwards. (Takes hold of *Augusta*.)

Berring—Hold, damn villain! How dare
 You touch a hair of hers!

(They fight and *Berring* swings the robber over a yawning precipice. In the melee the horses run away, throwing *Augusta* to the ground. First robber and *Berring* empty their pistols at each other over the prostrate form of *Augusta*, then clinch and a desperate struggle ensues. Finally *Berring* swings the robber over the precipice, barely saving himself by clinging to a sapling on the brink.)

Berring—By the holy cross
That is business worthy of a Titan!
The robbers and the stage are gone,
Mrs. Winton, swooning-blank with fear,
And I a wounded cripple.
How can I aid her? I'll try a sprinkle
Of this snow upon her upturned face,
Perhaps it may rescuscitate.

Augusta (sitting up)—Where am I?

Berring—On top the Sierras, alone with
Me, after a tug with the robbers.

Augusta—Oh, yes; I do remember something
Of it now; but then it seems the
Shadow of a dream more than reality.
Where is the stage?

Berring—The horses frightened at
The belching guns, with willing driver,
Trekked it down the grade at breakneck speed.
Where they now are I know not.

Augusta—Where are the robbers?

Berring—Gone down that bluff to
And dine to-morrow with the devil.

Augusta—What caused the fight?

Berring—Perhaps you will remember that
The burly fellow harshly bid you leave
The stage, and while, with chiseled features,
Leaning on the muddy wheel, he peered

With lustful eyes into your marble face,
And, seizing hold about the waist, did seek
Pollution of your lips, with snoup and breath
That garlic could in measure sweeten.
While using coarser words of action
Baser afterward.

I could no longer stand this gibe of hell,
With his effrontery.

My mother was a woman, pure and good,
And since her love and ministration
Settled like a hallow on my heart,
I dare all things where virtue is at stake,
And therefore bid a bold defiance to
The chit.

My clutch about the gullet forced
His breath into a whistling calliope.
This loosed his hold on you, and, struggling for
The brink of that yawning precipice,
Fortune favored me and started down
To Pluto with the robber.

The first disposed, the second came,
With blazing gun, and saddled for a ride
To death or victory. Our pistols met
And belched their shot and sulphur smoke
Across your prostrate form.

Then empty iron battered on our heads
Like tattoos on a kettle drum.

The clinch—it came at last!

And each did struggle manfully to save

His ugly fortune, balanced in the scale,
 So evenly that hope stood still as when
 An earthquake plows its passage through the earth
 With ridging waves beneath the helpless feet.
 At every turn we nearer margined on
 The brink of that destructive fall;
 'Then came the tug that told for time
 And for eternity.

By movement quick and dextrous, I sent
 Him whirling to his vicious comrade down
 A thousand feet below, and by a skint
 Of chance was left behind him short of breath
 And coatless, hanging to that tree.

Augusta—Are you hurt?

Berring—Oh, well. I think not seriously.
 My shoulder's cut across, and gun shot
 In my arm.

Augusta—Where?

Berring—(pulling off the residue of his coat and exhibiting a bloody shirt sleeve)—Just here.

Augusta—The blood flows freely, and with
 This flounce I'll bind it up securely.
 (Tears flounce off of her dress.)

Stage Driver (in the distance)—Hello, there, Mr. Berring! Are you dead entirely?

Berring—No, no; not quite,

Charlie. Where is the stage?

Stage Driver—Around the curve, full half a mile.

Berring—Round your team, and back it quickly.

Stage Driver—Never a bit! The road is so narrow that a frog with a long tail could not make the turn.

Berring—I fear the lady cannot walk so far.

Mrs. Winton—Yes, I feel quite strong.
That snow bath did its work completely.

Exit all.

Act 2, Scene 1. Virginia City.

Enter Berring and Mark Twain.

Mark Twain—Hello, Fritz.

How do you curb the undammed current of
Your love since making that great conquest on
The mountain top?

Berring—The conquest you suggest
Is all within the hollow of your strained
Imagination, long diseased.
By breeding myths and spooky hoboes.

Mark Twain—Oh, Albion, great Son of Neptune!
Do forbear to smear your skillet sauce
On spongy bread that's buttered twice.
It was conveyed to me by simple word
And paper squib that you in brave defense

Of womanhood had given quietus to
Two robbers, and had won a lovely one,
Unwooded before by manly action.

Berring—Most certainly.
There was a woman in the case ;
A jewel surely rare upon the earth,
But husbanded by another man, and I
A simple worshiper, and, vain of hope
As driving Ethan through the clouds,
She thanked me condescendingly for all
'The service rendered. Nothing more of this
There is, I can assure you.

Mark Twain—How is your hurt?

Berring—Improving rapidly.

Mark Twain—What kind of rag
Is that you have around it?

Berring—It is a tuck
From that fair woman's gown.
Discovering my predicament,
She ripped it at a jerk and bound it on
My arm to swage the running blood.

Mark Twain—I'll give you half an ounce of gold for it.

Berring—Wherefor?

Mark Twain—Oh, I simply wish it as
A souvenir to show my friends how much
There is in human nature to admire

And measure up the breadth of gallantry
Of man for woman wronged, without the hope
Or lingering wish for recompense.

Berring—Hold, man! Go take a Hammam bath,
And wash this jaundice from your scurvy blood
That blurs the wits and makes a little shad
Of common sense.

This rag to you is nothing, while to me
It's much, and all your wealth could not secure
A shred of it.

Mark Twain—Dispel your jealousy, my boy.
I see I've struck a tender spot in your
Anatomy; but let me give you just
A little poser. Didst thou ever see
A pair of breeches full of love and fury?
Set off dynamite with fuse and shell,
Or ford a river flowing into hell?
If so, and dread such consequence
Then give a married woman room to spread
Herself as does a trapper wing his net;
But never be a thing so foolish as
The chippering quail, to seek the dismal fork
Of such calamity.
The green-eyed monster, warmed and hatched
By ugly fantasies, would range the depths
Of pandemonium to reach his cuckler,
The earth does reek with blood of victims
Slaughtered on the vile and crooked paths

Of libertines, while heaven's justice
Seemingly approves their taking off.

Berring—Whence turned you thus a moralist,
And bulge Pandora's box of ills for all
Who dare to court a lovely woman not
His own; and if he can cut loose a bond
Of hers that makes a marriage but
A mockery of love!
Be done with this array of virtue which
Is stranger to your blood and ill becomes
Your father's scald-headed progeny.
I have no ill design, nor would I harm
The smallest hair of fair Augusta's head;
But since the noble soul of Cataline
Was taken far beyond the vaulted
Ether chambers in the universe
O! God that separates the burning stars,
No form or face, in my esteem, does whet
To life again the deep regard in which
I hold her, as this gem revealed to me
Most strangely opportune.
I know and watch my ropes as does
A sailor on a doubtful sea where tides
Nor winds make not a swell upon the deep,
Unseen nor heeded not by him.
Besides, my antecedents are as good
As hers; for there does run within my veins
The blue blood of a line of kings,

Caped with tone, unsullied down to date.
 So, Clemens, lose no sleep on my account.
 A coon of my proportions never sticks
 His head into a trap set as a snare
 To catch a cotton tail.

Mark Twain—Oh, blame your titled
 Imbeciles and sceptered monarchies.
 The page of history does reckon with them,
 Remembered mostly for their tyrant strut
 And bitterness of soul.
 The kings of men are those who dare the right,
 And damn a wrong or poltroon anywhere.

Exit Clemens.

Enter Winton.

Winton—Glad to meet you, Berring.
 I came to thank you for the favor done
 My wife, and bring from her congratulations.
 Your wound is healing rapidly, it seems;
 And with the poultice off the scar will be
 A souvenir to show your friends in years
 To come, while eloquently rehearsing
 The story of your prowess.
 But, with all your service, came I for
 Another favor that much concerns
 My future welfare.

Berring—Name the service I can render you.

Winton—The place not being yet filled,

I seek the Governor's appointment to
 The office of County Clerk.
 And, fully comprehending value of
 Support of yours, I ask it as a friend.

Berring—Though hedged about with applications for
 The place, you hold my preference.
 And, having now the Governor's ear, I think
 I can secure you that appointment.
 But before I promise sure I wish
 A word with you about a matter
 Vital to your future.

Winton—Proceed. I am all ears to hear
 Your candid counsel.

Berring—'Tis well. Your wife is handsome,
 The fairest in the town, and even now
 Has full a score of men half rattled when
 They bow or chance a word with her, yet
 You keep the treasure, unsuspecting, in
 This crowded hostelry.
 You tramp about the streets in search of work,
 And do allow her doubtful company,
 Instead of taking pains to go with her
 Yourself, which half discretion would suggest.

Winton—Her breed is good,
 And virtue steadfast as a star. Why then
 Suspect the sun of sheer inconstancy,
 Because its golden light doth gild and warm

The blackened world?

Berring—I do concede the beauty of
 The parallel, but in the bottom runs
 Of human nature conscience has no place,
 And even higher in the scale of life
 The animal does sway its destiny.
 When sense of soul and common honesty
 Forsake it in pursuit of ghoulish lust
 And strife for gain abnormal.

The spirit may be willing, but all flesh
 Is weak, and it is not uncommon that
 The drifted snow grows murky under heat
 And dust; the lily taints in company
 With fungus growth and deadly upas.
 So he who loves a woman or a garden
 Pure and sweet must love the welcome care
 And labor that will keep them so.
 The fool who leaves his fairest jewels where
 The common herd can see and finger them,
 Excites a disposition to purloin.

Candidly, I like your wife, and from
 My knowledge of the sordid make-up of
 The world, I know the danger she is in
 And warn you now in time.
 Get yourself a home and mind
 You nurture it with circumspection
 Mingled in with love and gentleness,
 Which will, if persevered, bring down the stars

Or take you up to them.

Winton—Your words are wisdom of
The better sort and heed I will with thanks
Your timely warnings.

Exit all.

Act 2, Scene 2. A Ballroom, Gold Hill.

Enter Pat O'Riley, singing.

The zephyr plays among the hills,
The swain his girl caresses;
And dallies, while old time he kills,
In playing with her tresses.

The stakes are set up on every grade
And claims hold down the dollars,
While women on the streets parade
To catch defenseless fellows.

Then up with hats! the winter's past,
The springtime brings the clover;
While every man has hope at last
And every lass her lover.
Chalinchalay chalinctum dell,

We're on the brimming river,
That floats all souls to ill or well,
And this goes on forever,
And this goes on forever. [Dances.]

The big four ride the Comstock lode,
 And claim they have a billion;
 While splitting stocks with silver goad
 To satisfy the million.

They buck the tiger of the band,
 With Flood tide swimming fences,
 While Johnny digs and whispers loud
 And Jamey takes their senses.

Then up with hats! the winter's past,
 The springtime brings the clover;
 While every man hath hope at last,
 And every lass her lover.

Chalinctum lay, chalinctum dell,
 We're on the brimming river,
 That floats all souls to ill or well,
 And this goes on forever,
 And this goes on forever.

[Dances off the stage.]

Enter Bandmaster, music and dancers of every grade and dress.

Bandmaster—Take your partners for a quadrille.
 (Music.) First four right and left.
 Second four.
 Ladies change.
 Gents.

Enter Lo Loreno (intoxicated, approaching Mrs. Winton on the floor.)

Loreno—Bueno, senorita; heap nice.
Give me a kiss. (Takes hold of Augusta.)

Jerry Jessup (partner of Mrs. Winton)
Scoundrel! how dare you insult a lady?
(Knocks Loreno down. A general melee; several shots fired; ladies scream; leave the room in confusion.)

Exit all.

Act 2, Scene 3. A Gaming House..

Enter Jerry Jessup (intoxicated.)

Jessup—My purse is low and spirit
Bad, and so for change I'll try
My luck in bucking at this monte bank.
Here's an eagle, 'tis the last I have,
And so I'll drop it on this ace of
Hearts.

Enter Will Sidden.

Sidden—Hold there, Jerry;
You are seas over, so you'll bet
No more to-night. Come home with me.

Gambler—Sir, what right have you
To break my game with this impertinence?

Sidden—I beg a pardon, but this is

My friend, and as you see, he's sheeted
 In the wind without a tiller wheel.
 Come pike, let's worry homeward.
 (Pulls Jessup from the room.)

Enter Lo Lorenzo. (Aside.)

Dis pike's de lumbr hit me at
 De ball (exhibiting a big knife),
 I kill him for it now in dis black night.

Erit.

Act 2, Scene 4. A Dark Street.

Enter Sidden and Jessup (Jessup drunk, Sidden pulling him.)

Sidden--Come along, Jerry, the night
 Dreary and the wind is high.

Jessup--Oh, you-you too-too da-dam
 S-smart, Sidden. A fel-low ca-can't
 Ha-have a good ta-time withou-out
 You po-poking you-you no-nose int-to
 Someb-body else b-business.

Sidden--Come, come, Jerry, what would
 Your mother and sister think if they
 Should behold you thus?

Enter Lo Lorenzo (slipping along in the darkness stabs Jessup in the back and disappears.)

Jessup (falling to the ground)—O God!
I'm stabbed to death!

Sidden--Where?

Jessup—In the back. Draw the knife
Before I die.

Sidden (drawing out the knife, cries)—Help!
Help! murder! murder.

Enter Policeman.

Policeman—What's the matter here?

Sidden—My friend has been stabbed
To death by some villain slipping
Up behind

Policeman—What are you doing
With that bloody knife?

Sidden—Why. I just pulled it
Out of my friend's back.

Policeman—A pretty story, surely.
I have caught you in the very act
Of murder. Come with me.

Sidden—Caught me in the act of murder.
How?

Policeman—You still retain the bloody knife
With clothes bespattered with the
Gore.

Sidden—The charge is false as hell!
 He is my friend, whom I was leading
 Home, half drunk, from Tupper's gambling
 Hall.

Policeman—Your story is too thin for surface
 Diggins in these parts, so come to jail..

Exit.

Act 2, Scene 8. Kentucky Home of the Jessups. Mrs.
 Jessup, an invalid.

Enter Helen Jessup.

Helen—Dear mother, after months
 Of waiting I have a letter here
 Received to-day from those we love,
 Who dwell in that far region of the
 West where daylight glows her final
 Ending, when the curtain of the night
 Is stretched midway the ocean.

Mrs. Jessup—Read the letter, my daughter,
 This suspense oppresses me.

(Helen breaks the seal and glances over its contents,
 much agitated.)

Mrs. Jessup—Helen, I bid you read
 The letter to me without delay.

Helen—I can not, mother; it would
 Kill you.

Mrs. Jessup—Give me the letter immediately.

(Helen hands the letter to her mother and bows her head in her parent's lap.)

Mrs. Jessup (reads, screams)—O God! it is All over with me now! (Dies taken off the stage.)

Enter Squire Blake.

Squire Blake—Well, Miss Helen,
I come to offer condolence regarding
The loss of your noble mother, and
I understand you have another trouble
Outlined in a letter recently received
From friends in the far West, which
Seems to have been the chief cause of
Your parent's untimely taking off.
Will you give me some detail of this
Unhappy affair?

Helen—Here is the letter that killed
My mother, and the incentive that
Impels me to visit Nevada.

(Squire Blake reads.)

Virginia City, Aug. 26, 1861.

My Dear Helen:
Since I last wrote
You a great calamity has overtaken us.
Two years ago the 29th of April last
Your Brother Jerry was fatally stabbed
On a public street of this city, he

Falling from my arms and dying almost
Immediately, without speaking more than a word.
I got nothing save a glimpse of
The murderer, as he approached us from
Behind, stabbing Jerry in the back,
Then disappearing like a shadow in
The blackness of the dreary night.
Thoughtlessly I withdrew the long dirk
From the wound and yelled murder.
At this several citizens ran to our
Relief, and with them a policeman
Who observing me with the bloody
Knife in hand, charged me with the
Crime, and conveyed me to the lockup,
Where I have been detained ever
Since.

In a trial before the United States District
Court I have been found guilty as
Charged, and sentenced for a term
Of three years at hard labor in the
Territorial prison, near Carson City,
Which is nearly ready for occupancy.
I am sure this recital will be a blow
Terrible to yourself and mother.
I have delayed writing for months,
Hoping a favorable turn in my case,
But the burden of proof seems to be
Against me, and everybody is so busy
With his own affairs that a jury would

Agree to hang a saint rather than
 Be detained twenty-four hours.
 So, in justice to you, however trying
 The ordeal, I feel duty bound to give
 You the facts.

I hope your verdict will be reserved
 Until you learn more of this matter.
 If I cannot prove my innocence ; if
 I am to go through life with the verdict
 Of your brother's blood on my hands,
 Death can be my only consolation in
 This world.

My only hope is that a time will come
 When this foul murder will out,
 And the suspicion resting upon my
 name may be removed.

May your Christian fortitude sustain
 You in this trying hour.
 God bless you and farewell.

Your wretched but devoted, William Sidden.

Squire Blake—This is a fearful recital, Miss Helen,
 And should stagger your determination
 In the hazardous journey proposed.

Helen—It is the cowardly only who
 Stagger when plain duty calls, and
 Makes excuses for a will unnerved.

Squire Blake—Do you believe William
 Sidden guilty of this crime?

Helen—Do you believe that God reigns
And the Redeemer lives?

Squire Blake—Certainly I do.

Helen—Do you believe there is
Any honor or virtue in the world?

Squire Blake—How you talk, my child!
Your blazing questions burn down in
To my heart, and brace my better nature
To declare ther does exist the sweetest
Virtue and the fairest honor.

Helen—Ah, well. And so do I
Believe in this divinity
And offer up devotion daily.
For proof of God's infinity is found
Complete in the complexity of flesh
And mind and soul commingled in a way
That makes the dust we tread upon to breathe
And walk and think.
Thus baffling the cogitations of
The skeptic, setting all philosophy
At naught, and placing sober science in
The nursery of thought, like children
Swaddled and diverted by
The tinkling of their rattles.
And yet my faith in this unriddled
Manifest is but as dross compared
To that I have in William Sidden's
Innocence.

Squire Blake—But the burden of proof
Seems against him.

Helen—So it seemed against Christ in
The trumped up charges that he had violated
Roman law, and suffered pangs of death
Between two malefactors.
Did the world lose faith in Him for that?
No, no; it was the culmination of a love
The like of which was never known before
Or since, and come what may for good
Or ill, my faith in God and he who is
Betrothed to me shall never budge an inch
In my devotion.

Squire Blake (aside)—By my mother's grave
I'd rather have such love as that
In camp or hollow tree, than lace of gold
And fine prunella in a castle rich
And rare in every luxury.
Then go, my girl; I'll caw no more at your
Strong bent, for all there is of beauty in
The world that's worth the name will follow you.
May heaven bless this high resolve and break
Sweet daylight in each path you may be called
To tread.

Act 2, Scene 5. Home of the Wintons.

Enter Winton and his little girl.

Winton—Where did papa's baby get
So much candy.

Baby—Miser Berring dave it to me.

Winton—How often does he come here
When papa's gone?

Baby—Oh, I dasn't no. Sometimes, and
Brings me tandy.

Winton—So, so!

Enter Augusta.

Winton—Augusta, for what purpose
Is Mr. Berring allowed to visit you
From day to day, and always in my absence?

Augusta—Seldom does he come and then
Not of my choosing.

Winton—Why then comes he at all?

Augusta—Because you have insisted that
I give him no offense. Shall I forbid
The house to him?

Winton—If you can manage it in way
That wards supicion off my wish.

Augusta—What do you mean by that?

Winton—Well, you know I am much
 Stuffed with obigations to the man
 For favors shown politically and otherwise.
 So to offend would be my funeral
 Heap of martyred indiscretion.

Augusta—Then you want him gone without
 Suspicion that you did demand his
 Going.

Winton—That's it, exactly, dear Augusta.
 Not a downright dose of peppered words,
 But in that way a woman knows the best
 How to relieve herself of an unwelcome
 Visitor.

Augusta—Very well; your word is
 Law to me in this affair.

Exit.

Act 2, Scene 6. A Street in Virginia City.

Enter Winton and Mrs. Alcesta.

Mrs. Alcesta—Good evening, Mr.
Winton. How's your wife to-day?

Winton—She was well this morning
 When I left home.

Mrs. Alcesta—Somebody else seems
 More attentive to Augusta than yourself.

Winton—To whom do you refer?

Mrs. Alcesta—Well, I don't wish
To make trouble between man and wife,
But you observe I live here where I
Can't help seeing everybody going to
Your house, and it seems my duty as
A virtuous woman to reveal what I
Have seen since you moved up on
The hill. That is, if you would like
To hear it?

Winton—Go on with your story.

Mrs. Alcesta—Of course you know
Mr. Berring is a constant visitor at the
House in your absence?

Winton—A constant visitor! What do
You mean, woman?

Mrs. Alcesta—Well, perhaps I ought
Not to say that, but he is there quite
Often.

Winton—How long does he stay?

Mrs. Alcesta—Well, I should say from
Half to an hour and a half, and the
Curtains are usually drawn down
When he comes.

Oh, it is really awful to think of
A married woman letting another
Man in the house while her husband
Is absent.

I should not dare do such a thing
 Unless it happened to be some particular
 Friend or intimate acquaintance,
 For you know temptation is continually set
 In the way to take advantage of our little weaknesses.
 Your wife, I may say, is proud and handsome,
 Will not notice me upon the street and
 Seems indifferent to those who may behold
 Her callers, as if in blind contempt of
 Other people's tongues.
 And as a friend, with much
 Experience in the world, I would
 Advise you come up from
 Business unexpected ; look out a bit
 For lady love, stray letters, doubtful
 In propriety, or some fine day
 Your duckv may be missing.

Act 2, Scene 7. Winton's Parlor.

Enter Winton and Augusta.

Winton—Well, my lady, I have
 You at last in the hollow of my
 Hand.
 Here's a letter from your lover
 Which I fortunately intercepted at the
 Post this afternoon.
 It tells the story of your faithlessness

To me and attachment for a villain
Wearing the garb of a friend.

Augusta—I do not understand you.
Mr. Winton, please explain yourself!

Winton—You don't hev! Then read
This letter and tell me what it means.

Augusta (reading)—

San Francisco, Oct. 10, 1861.

My Dear Mrs. Winton:

I herewith send

The baby some trinkets and youself

A diamond ring, which I trust

You will accept and wear as a

Small token of my esteem.

I shall remain in the city some

Weeks and hope to meet you during

Your stay in Alameda.

Devotedly yours,

Fritz B—

Winton—That's a duck without feathers,

Ain't it? Devotedly yours. Surely

He is . A lark with a wanton's wing

Roosting on my threshold.

Hell and blazes! Where's thy virtue,

Woman? This thing smells to heaven

And all pandemonium is leering at

A cuckold fool.

I shall preserve this darling evidence

In action for a quick divorce which I
Propose to institute immediately.

Augusta—I can assure you, Mr. Winton,
That I have never given Mr. Berring
Encouragement to write such.
If he has been so foolish indiscreetly
To pen such flattering compliments to a
Married woman, certainly I should not
Be held responsible in this affair.

Winton—Oh, no; certainly not.
But how about expecting to meet
You soon in Alameda?

Augusta—Mr. Berring learned of my
Proposed visit to Alameda, here in
Your presence one evening, when the
Fact was inadvertently mentioned—
There is nothing more in this affair
I can assure you.

Winton—Woman, take me not for some
Ungainly ass, that brays aloud and wags
His skinny tail; then dopes his greedy maw
With mouldy fodder.
I know a kit
Of stinking fish by smelling it.
And for a man, that's sane, to breakfast on
A dowdy shad and call it clean,
Forgets the honor of his mother,

Sleeping like a lewd in dirty sheets
 Not of his soiling
 I am content to let the devil take
 His own and fry the fat of hypocrites
 Who fawn and whine of virtue wronged,
 Then set up shop where virtue never goes.
 So, henceforth, as streams converging at
 Their source, diverging as they onward move
 To rivers never joined ;
 Let us drink of Lethean waters
 That remembrance may blot the page
 Of its unhappy record.

Augusta—Ah! Well!

If thou durst will it thus, 't's surely done ;
 But then this hemlock tripped bittered by
 The pique and garget of your angry words
 Is draught of hell's own cheerless choosing,
 Staggering the valid witness of
 Your antecedents
 In honest, upright souls, this sleeping child
 Should lend degree of sympathy between
 The figure and gargoyle of your angry words
 The pair that give it life, and soften down
 Asperities, that grow like arbor gourds
 In jealous minds.
 There are stabs of dangerous import
 That time may heal, but when a heart is pierced
 The life it did sustain must fail

And wither like a flower frosted for
The grave.

I was a child in years when you did plead
My hand, with mind unskilled in many things,
And doubtful where my highest duty lay.
But finally when faith and love stood pledged
To you, the sun when flaming all the Orient
No surer turns the morning glory in
Its greeting, than your coming did my face
To thee.

Your will has stood before me like a light
That one does follow trustingly.

At times, perhaps,

When kindness was a little strained with you,
I may have seemed with saddened face as does
A star behind a fleeting cloud;
But then the star had never budged an inch
In its ascension.

Shall all this faith and constancy fall by
The way like chilled and withered leaves?

Winton—Too late this pleading comes,
This home is like a house built on the sand
Without foundation worthy of the name;
Go where you will, the silver cord is loosened
And the golden bowl is broken.

Exit Winton.

Augusta—Can it be that this is not a dream?
Does destiny work woe like this?

If Jealousy can wear his garb of green,
 And blast a home where dwelleth purity,
 Where can the true heart find degree of rest?
 An outcast am I, grimy on the brink
 Of desolation for an awful crime
 That never was committed.
 My child! She sleeps!
 God bless her little soul, and when I'm gone
 May heaven grant that innocence shall feel
 No pang for action not its own.
 Farewell, dear one, my ruined life seeks peace
 Where all the sorrows of the world do
 Find a resting place.

Exit.

Act 2. Scene 8. A Street in Virginia City.

Enter Happy Jack (singing).

Happy Jack—

O, Nancy Jinks, I'm mighty glad
 You are so sweet a critter;
 She's got a beau for every toe,
 And not a soul can get her.
 Green grow the rushes, O!

Enter Winton (running up against H. J.).

Winton—What the devil are you doing here?

Happy Jack—And what the devil are you

Doing here—running over a fellow like
A bison bull left behind his herd?

Winton—Looking for a woman lost!

Happy Jack—Who lost her?

Winton—I did, by mishap of my tongue and temper.

Happy Jack—Then may you find her not,
If she is strayed on that account.
For any woman scorned by rankling words
And low down epithets, will kick the shins
Of him who undertakes to rub the oil
Of harmony into her marrow bones.
Again, and blight will set like toadstools damp
And cold, where once the roses grew.

Winton—Oh, hang your moral gush
To dry in Haides! Have you seen the one
I seek?
Square-footed give me what you know, or go.

Happy Jack—Well, briefly stated, I
Did see a form, like some lost soul in white,
With something kin to raven's wing for hood.
It flitted up toward the crown of sun peak,
When with airy feet the summit pressed,
It seemed to give an invocation thus:
Then passed beyond, just as the morning light
Streamed from the sun as came its burning car
From margin of the underworld.

Winton—Where were you at the time?

Happy Jack—Just rounding Devil's neck,
With stage and six in hand.

Winton—Saw you else of this affair?

Happy Jack—A moment later I observed
A grooking, crawling thing, in shape of man
High on the mountain side, unsteady in
Its gait, creeping this way, then in that,
Then straight ahead, as if in search
Of something lost.
Mayhap pursuing stealthily the form
In robes before outlined.

Exit (singing).

Green grow the rushes, O!
The sweetest hour I ever spent
Was with the fair young lassies, O!

Winton—That fellow has surely seen
The bird I'm after, but that other form
What the Devil was it?
I'll get assistance for a search.
Hello, Colonel Wasson. (Banging on a door.)

Wasson (above)—Who's down there banging at the door?

Winton—Dress, and come down, Colonel.
I am in trouble.

Wasson (opening the door)—Winton, you here,
In the half-opened eye of the morning,

Looking like a ghost, with Charon boating
On the river Styx, with freight of souls
For Cerberus.

Winton—My wife has run away.

Wasson—Which way did she run?

Winton—An apparition like a spirit lost
Has just been seen upon the summit of
Mount Davidson, and, clambering up
Its side a crouching form as if of
Bloodhound breed, seemingly pursuing it.

Wasson—Why did she trek it thus
Between two days?

Winton—Oh, well, you see, I went
Home cross. The green-eyed monster
Prompting me, I gave in words not gentle
Vent to foul suspicion of a liaison
With Primrose Berring, when she took
Offence, and talked me back as any
Woman will at seeming slight.
At this my temper ruffled up like
The setting quills of some old porcupine,
And in my rage did bid her go to——
Where the woodbine twineth.
At this she swooned away, when
I did take my leave unceremoniously,
And walked the town for full three hours.
Then, like a cur returning to its kennel,
After killing sheep, I sneaked the streets

Most cautiously, and, reaching home,
 Just as the morning cock set up
 A clamor that the old oblivion of
 The night had fled.
 And fled also had fair Augusta.

Wasson—Ye gods,
 What asses mortals are to stick
 Their noses in a pinch and whine because
 It hurts.
 How infinitely wise and good was God
 To give the devil fire in which to fry
 The fat of fools!
 Like Tantalus, they strive in vain for that
 Beyond their reach, and in the strife lose what
 They have; then wail because they have it not.
 If all the evil hap'nings in the world,
 That never happened anywhere, save in
 The gloomy garrets of disordered minds,
 Could pass unheeded by,
 Full half the ills of life would disappear,
 As mist before the rising sun.
 Oh heaven help to make us over in
 A world less obdurate and splinted up
 With charity that can detect a glint
 Of beauty where there's much of it.

Enter Mark Twain.

Mark T.—Well, I am surprised to see
 Two worthies pillowed on a public street

At an hour so untimely.

What's in the wind to warrant this array?

Wasson—Winton's lost his wife,
And wants to garnishee the stars to aid
In her recovery.

Mark T.—I know her not! Presume you that
The treking game is worth the burning of
This early candle.

Wasson—The fairest Piute squaw
On all these barren hills seems but
As baboon, buckskin-breeched, to angelized
Augusta, whom we seek.

Mark T.—If angelized, why wish her back
To this abode of dirt and devil broth?
I never knew but one such creature in
This place, where Clytemnestra seems to rule
Supreme.

Wasson—What angel mean you, Mark?

Mark T.—The printer Myran, who,
With Dan de Quille for pen and inkhorn can
With ease, a coal pit galvanize, or swing
A toad and make a seraph of it.
Which way has Winton's dulcy flown?

Wasson—It seems she's taken to
The mountains, like a fawn pursued.
Come on. We'll scale the breast of this
Old mother of the peeping hills.

Exit all.

Act 2, Scene 8. A Grotto at Base of Mountains.

Enter Lorenzo (carrying a white form).

Lorenzo—Ah, senora; you is me one at

Las. A hard old tug, yet here

We is. Just under bluff where yo

Was kill vo self. Come in me

Casa, where me lif.

(Puts her in, gets in and rolls stone in doorway.)

Enter Wasson, Mark Twain and Winton.

Wasson—Well, here we are at base

Of Davidson, whereon we've rambled hours

Searching for a treasure lost.

Here seems the last of that old moccasin

Traced to apex, then meandering down

Again from brink of this high precipice,

Where last we saw the slipper's imprint.

The villain must be hereabouts with prize

Secreted. Come and let us search for them.

Here seems a cavern at the base of this

Old bluff, walled in with streaks of shining quartz

And gray-gowned adamant. (Rolling away stone.)

Hello, you denizens of darkness!

Who's in there?

(A voice within.) An hombre miras

Lo que pacies. Go way or I kill you.

Wasson—Well, Winton, I think we

Have located your wife, yet there
 Seems to be a brief obstruction to
 Her rescue. Will you go down in the den
 And make examination of the premises?

Winton—What, and get loaded up
 With lead for my surprising pains?
 Let the devil take her for a messmate
 Rather than make a mess of flesh and
 Bitter sauce for me to breakfast on.

Wasson—So Mark, it seems the game is up
 Unless you volunteer recovery of the prize.
 This adventure will immortalize
 You more than all the pens and inkhorns used
 In twenty years.

Mark Twain—I beg of you, dear Colonel, not
 To rob yourself of such an honor,
 My ambition runs in other lines.
 With quill in hand and Dan Dequill for help
 We can with ease set up the whole of this
 Great territory, stretching every ear
 To greatest length of braying asses
 Utmost, when they hear of this wonder
 Double headlined in the *Enterprise*,
 Thus soaring like the new-born sun,
 Or sailing on the wings of night
 To reach an eminence of black or white
 That will adorn a simple tale.
 But when it comes to guns and saber cuts

My bones shake in my boots and all my hair
 Does bristle like the troubled porcupine.
 No, no, dear Wasson, I could never think
 Of robbing you of honor in a field
 Of action common to your trade.
 And if you dare the villain in that den
 And bring the woman out alive,
 The *Enterprise* shall flare and flame as does
 A signal fire on a mighty hill.
 And in the foreground shall appear your name,
 Nighed high upon the glowing arch of fame.

Wasson—Oh, good Lord, what stuff!
 Shut off your screaming calliope
 And give us all a rest.
 Is that you down there, Lorenzo?

Lorenzo—You go, dis my casa!
 Come no here—'hombre die.

Wasson—We want the woman, bring her out.

Lorenzo—You can no haf her, she go jump
 Kill herself, I catch an of her so
 She mine.

Wasson—Her husband's here with me
 And we'll blow off your head unless
 You give her up.

Lorenzo—No, no; he no kill a rat.
 He too mucha one big coward.

Wasson—Will you let us talk with Mrs. Winton?

Loreno—No, no. You no see her, she no talk.
You vamoose or I shoot you!

Wasson (falling and rolling down into the cavern;
several shots are fired; Loreno severely wounded, when
Mrs. Winton is brought out of the grotto)—
Here, now, I have the lady safe, so let
Us travel to the town.

Winton (addressing his wife)—It seems
You've had a fearful tramp and bad
Experience with a cunning scamp.
Will you go home with me, Augusta?

Augusta—No, I never can. It is no
Longer home for me. There never can
Be rest beneath its roof. The wildest wood
Is as a paradise to such a place.
For surely is the name of home
A jarring mockery where cold reproach
Burns like a bitter frost the tender plant
Of sympathy.
The desert loses all its horrors to
The wandering Arab, housed in canvas walls
With those he loves, as share and share alike
They take of good and ill.
While in fair castles on embowered isles
Of genial warmth, with winds in which the late-
Shorn lambs delight to skip contentedly,
Are often barren of the bliss of peace
Where loving hearts strike home in unison.

The make-up of this checkered life is so
 Uncertain, that the tear-stained dirge
 Of happiness often crowds on fleeting heels
 Of hymen's merry march.

Sad-hearted memories of the past
 Have grown a wilderness between us
 Sunless as the halls of Eserhadden.
 Destiny hath drawn his iron fingers
 Through my heart so deep and cruelly,
 That lacerated as it is I seek
 No consolation but to be alone
 With my own misery.
 Give me clothes, my child and means to reach
 My father's home, and you shall never
 Wrinkle up your brow at me again!

Winton—'Tis well, perhaps, that you have so decreed,
 Whatever else, in this we are agreed,
 And so make ready for the final start,
 There's ill between us and no faith in heart.

Exit all but Winton.

Winton—So, so. She's gone and I am left alone.
 Distempered through with vain conceits, I yet
 Have sense enough to know my folly in
 This tumble turn of pride and ruined hopes.
 The chances seem that she is wrong accused
 And I to blame for that accusing.
 Coupled with the ills resulting,
 The gaw and selfishness of many lives

Show not their color skimming summer seas,
 But in the warp of murky weather flare
 Their wanton flags.

Much is the pity, but the truth should out
 Though galling like a truss in sultry heat!
 What fantasies we weave of airy nothings
 And augur ills that never come to pass.
 The soundest thought in all philosophy
 Is to hold the scales in even balance—

“Duty with the soul of charity,”
 The gabble of the world that nimbly takes
 Its seasoning from so many enmities,
 Does break more rotten ground in hell than all
 The other woes not in the train of this
 Great monster.

A tender plant will wither at the touch
 Of frost, as does the gentle germ of love
 In keeping of a taunting fool.
 The greatest sorrow of each soul, perhaps,
 Is nurtured in the hollow wish to live
 Its troubled life again, that mistakes made
 And wrongs imposed might be effaced
 From act and memory, in better moods
 Made possible by sad experience.
 The consciousness of action ill-advised
 And selfishness that sorrow other lives
 Do weight the load that every mortal bears.
 Perhaps there is a respite, so decreed

In this, that death is one eternal void,
 In which the blank of memory allows
 Forgetfulness to sleep in peace.
 I hope it may be so,
 For conscience is a heavy load to lug
 While conscious wrong is ever manifest.
 If there be hell beyond the confines of
 This life, for torment of the lost and damned,
 The goad of burning brimstone cannot add
 To agony of deep remorse which gnaws
 The soul that's pinioned down forever with
 The skeleton of its own dishonor.

Exit.

Act 2, Scene 9. A Street in Virginia City.

Enter Happy Jack (singing.)

The earth spreads out her ample lap
 To nurture fairest roses,
 While nature sets without a gap
 The hills and dales with posies.

The trees are warming in the sun
 Their leaflets and their fingers,
 And May day has the garb of one
 Who blushes while she lingers.

God has planted beauty here
 Wherever grows the bower,

And each should love the living year,
 With all its sun and shower.

Hie ding ding, the cat and the king,
 The cow jumped over the moon, sir;
 The little doggy burnt his tail,
 And you'll get whipped to-morrow.

Life is sunlight to the soul
 That seeks another's pleasure,
 And with the good there is no dole
 In spreading heaven's treasure.

If all could see the living light
 That flames in God's great arches,
 Soon would disappear the night
 And sweet would be their marches.

We strive for things we cannot use,
 To sate a miser's wooing;
 And nobleness of heart abuse—
 The best of life undoing.

Unmindful man of passing years,
 Unheedful of the ages;
 The record angel blots with tears
 As turns old Time the pages.

So cycles pass with man in state,
 To one great common dooming;
 While nations dwell, that once were great,
 In one great common tumbing.

And all because the gleaner grows
 Not what in truth he's reaping,
 As pitiless the toiler sows
 In want, with children weeping. (Chorus.)

Enter Berring.

Berring—Hold up your warble, Jack,
 I have a job for you.

Happy Jack—Well, pay me in advance
 An' I'll be aisy with the crather.

Berring—No, not a red cent until
 The service is completed.

Happy Jack—What is the service worth to me?

Berring—If well performed, more than a year's
 staging.

Happy Jack—Pray unwind the thread of this
 Adventure.

Berring—Well, you know that Winton's wife
 Hath peppered with the fool and skipped
 The town with dudgeon in her blazing eye
 And pent-up sorrow in her heart.

Happy Jack—Well?

Berring—Well, in confidence I will
 Admit I am in love with her and wish
 To follow, as hunter does a nimble deer.

Happy Jack—Yes, yes; and so I thought.
 But such occurrences are common, sir—

Most common in this town, where scarce
 A shift can cross a public street,
 Or flutter in the wind, that does not
 Have at least a score of
 Oglers on her track, with breath of
 Onions, panting for the chase.

Berring—Fie on you, man ;
 Why moralize, when rich reward
 Stands tiptoe for a service small indeed?

Happy Jack—Because my mother was a woman,
 Doubled with a sister pure as snow,
 With love so blind and dominating in
 Her nature that she fell an easy prey
 To blandishments of one less carmel
 Your single self.

Berring—Waylay your jaws !
 This surprising impudence doth clog
 The avenue of common decency
 And ribald heaven with a jibing tongue.

Happy Jack—Console yourself, a better day will come.

Berring—When?

Happy Jack—When enough of ghouls most ravenous
 Inlaid with prying libertines,
 Shall pass the gates of purgatory,
 To make a holiday in hell.

Berring—Be satisfied, thou saucy scoffer,
 This proposal for espionage hath not

The color of a lax or dark intent.
 But since the woman leaves the burly burg,
 Without escort or friendly hand to help
 In need, what sin is there in shielding her
 From harm, and even keep a watch to meet
 Emergencies?

Happy Jack—Oh, well ; proceed.
 I see it is the same old story of
 A Jack black in a lover's garb that does
 Protest a friendship that is friendless when
 Unclouded lust can dictate terms.

Berring—Bandy no more words. I simply wish
 To know if you will take the job?

Happy Jack—How much in nuggets is it worth to me?

Berring—A hundred ounces of the brightest gold
 The Comstock lode affords.

Happy Jack—Well, many saints
 Have fallen bauld for less amount,
 And since I am no saint or moralist
 Beyond the measure of a common need,
 That hinges on respectability,
 I grant your case and take the burthen up,
 Conditioned that I shall not carry this
 Espionage to degree that blurs the sense
 Of common decency.

Berring—'Tis well. I mean no harm.
 Would not a hair of hers unloosen from

Its braid, nor turn a trump that is not in
The shuffled deck.

Hanny Jack—Then give your charge and I
Shall bend submissive to its mandate.

Berring—'Tis this—
With circumspection travel to the coast,
And when you reach the Occidental
City wharf with shanties built about
The tide and scrambling up the grade and out
Among the hills, that fix their foothold in
The mother sea, turn, and looking eastward,
Where you will behold a winding
Silver horn that creeps along between
The sylvan woods, as yet but little known
To canoe or her sister argosies,
Within a slip upon the city's front
A paddle steamer, called the Clinton, sits
And breathes upon the changing tide.
Board this vessel, she will shortly cross
The sapphire stretch of placid bay
And enter in the shining horn.
When its meanderings margin on a league
There will appear to right a narrow wharf
That sways on shaky underpinning.
Landing here, tramp down the heaved up
Highway half a mile, with ample rush
And salt grass green on either hand.
Then bearing eastward through the margin of

The oak for several rods, you will observe
A gothic, gabled home, vine-clad and banked
About with battle roses.
This is Augusta's childhood home,
Where she will surely be before you reach
The place. Seek service there.
The master dignified you'll find, with stretch
Of strut that lifts and lowers all his form
At every step.
He hath perceptions like a sharp-billed hawk
That broods above a chicken yard.
Be wary of him, keep your wits in play,
And lose no trick that sleight of hand can hold.
Stint no job of work assigned
And make your service indispensable.
Cuddle with the cook, anticipate
Her every wish and praise the sops she gives
You for a dinner.
Compliments are cheap, but dallied in
A woman's ear will yield more juicy fruit
Than softer words or more pretentious speech.
Make your ear a grand receiver
For wireless telegraphy,
But never anxious seem in any way
To learn the inmost of her little soul.
Be, in fact, her confident, for she
Is jewel of the household when you wish
To dig about to find its harbored secrets.

Thus ensconced, you can with ease
Find out each move Augusta makes
And send, clandestinely, the gist of all
Your finding out.

Exit Berring.

Happy Jack—What fools we mortals are
To pester out our lives about the wives
Of other men and coax a gunshot in
The ribs before we get a nip or sprig
Of smilax from her lips.

But then it's all the same to me. I was
Not born to rule the milky way.
And so I'll do as bid and get my pay,
And leave Fritz Berring in a shay
That line the road to deviltry.

Exit (singing.)

Sally Dooley ran away
To catch an ancient lover,
Her breath was like the new-mown hay
Or blossoms on the clover.

Act 3, Scene 1. Room in the Hotel, Carson City.

Enter Helen Jessup.

Helen—And this hotel is near the prison
In which my lover lingers in confinement
For a crime not his!
No! He is so gently tender in

His nature that a bug could face him in
 A towpath with security, and singing,
 Praise its maker for a footfall that
 Has never harmed a living thing.
 A woman may be weak, indeed, but then
 It is her purity in tears that makes
 A fortress, where all manly honor stands
 Like adamant in her defense.
 It seems Divinity hat willed it, that
 On all occasions where affliction claims
 Support, the burly captain in his straps,
 And strutting lord of high degree, wrapped
 In rattling armor, pale with quaking fear
 Where woman dares to go for those she loves.
 I have no hope but in my troth to him.
 So here I am to stay, come good or ill,
 And if I fail the rescue, here my bones
 Shall bleach, and if my spirit is allowed
 The latitude, its wail shall start the hair
 To bristles on the head of every one
 That did abet this foul injustice.

Enter Clerk.

Clerk—Miss Jessup, this is Mrs.
 Winton from Virginia City, seeking
 Lodgings for the night, and not
 A bed to spare save extra one this
 Room affords, so beg consent that she
 And child may lodge with you.

Helen Jessup—Most willingly, with due
Appreciation for this compliment.

Exit Clerk.

Unhood, good lady, doff your heavy cloak,
You must be weary with the journey.
And now, my little dear, let me undo
Your wraps. How sweet and beautiful you are.
A mother's treasure and a father's joy.
Memory indulges me that I
Have heard your name before.
Can this be Augusta Winton of
Virginia City?

Augusta—The same, and this, I think,
Must be Miss Jessup, sister of brave
Jerry and betrothed of William Sidden?

Helen—It is, but how your words
Do take my breath. A stranger and a friend
Revealed most opportune.
Will Sidden wrote me how
A greaser named Loreno sought to kiss
You at a ball while dancing with my brother,
Who in his wrath did floor the saucy
Fellow for his impudence.

Augusta—Yes, 'tis even so, and ever since
I've taken interest in your brother's case,
And like some horror a suspicion haunts
Me that the blow he struck Loreno for

Insult he offered had no little part
In that untimely taking off.

Helen—Then have you doubt who killed my brother?
Was it William Sidden?

Augusta—Believe that Sidden killed brave Jerry?
Wherefore should I? Surely there is much
Of evil in the world, but where or when
Was mortal in his senses ever known
To kill his friend without a cause?
'Tis true, it hath been done in drunken brawl,
But Sidden never touched the scorpion
That stings to death its boosy confidant
And ruins half the race and waters half
The world with tears.

Helen—Sweet heaven, bend this way
Thy glowing stars as stepping-stones to reach
Nirvana's chambers of the blest, where now
My mother's spirit beckons me.
Forever will I love and bless your life,
Augusta, for these noble words that melt
A night of sorrow into sunbeams.
I knew it all before, as does a trusting
Mariner, cast off by heavy seas;
In boat with broken ribs and tattered sail—
There is to leaward peaceful anchorage
If but the straining ship can hold her sides
Together through the blinding storm.

Augusta—I can conceive the joy you feel
To hear of this assurity, but why
So far from home and friends?

Helen—The promptings of my heart
For William Sidden's life and liberty.
Did call me to this place and here I am
'To stay, and die if need be in the fight

Augusta—Have you seen him since
Arriving here?

Helen—Yes, to-day
I managed entrance in the prison,
Saw him working in his stripes and had
A talk of home, of loved ones there
And of my faith, as steady as a star,
Without its aberration.
At this the dreary sadness of his face
Went out as does a mist that thwarts the sun.
Perhaps you've seen the like, I never did
Before, save when my father died.
The fell destroyer gnawing all
His vitals out, ran through his fevered blood
Like fiery serpents in a race with life.
But when,
On reaching portal of another world,
He said, in words scarce audible, "My child,
Who sings? I hear a strain unearthly in
Its sweetness and I feel constrained to go.
Come bear me company." Then pressing

Tenderly my hand, the wrinkled
 Sorrows left his face, and even I,
 Though mortal as I am, did get a glimpse
 Of paradise.

At this full-faith avowal Sidden took
 Me in his arms, with aspen tremble,
 Implanting kisses on my cheek like one
 With burthened heart who finds a jewel
 Counted lost.

The burly guard, not liking this display,
 Did snatch at me and sought a like embrace.
 God seems to have ordained it thus
 That manly men can not be cowed by fear,
 So in a flash Will's face grew rigid as
 An iron shield and then his Spartan fist
 Went smash into that brutal chop.
 The slump, prone on his back, did yell
 For help, when others came to his relief,
 And in unmanly ways dragged Will to door
 Of a new dungeon, half finished at the top,
 Where in the damp, cold place my love was thrust,
 Chained as a beast to flagstone in the floor
 To live on bread and water for a week.

Augusta—And will you try to see his face again?

Helen—Try? I'm here to stay!

And all the chains and ropes the town affords
 Cannot enthrall me strong enough to lag
 My will to try;

But, dear Augusta, pardon this harangue
 It's run at loose ends long enough to make
 You think me something of a dawdle—
 Tell me of yourself and future hope

Augusta—My past seems black with disappointment
 And all my future like a star gone down.

Helen—Your husband and your home,
 Is there no comfort in the thought?

Augusta—I have no husband, neither home,
 And all the comfort left me is this child
 And nursing my own misery.

Helen—How so?

Augusta—The green and yellow jaundice of
 A jealous mind hath bound a potion to
 My bleeding heart, that sadly weakens its
 Impulses as I drag my load along
 And as a weary pilgrim, seemingly,
 I climb the frozen path to summit of
 The Everest to look beyond
 On desolation.
 And yet, I seek, as respite on the way,
 The portals of my father's home to balm
 The wounds I have received from one who pledged
 His faith to me forever more.

Helen—Hope always, dear Augusta;
 Each sun makes to the world another day
 And as the night takes dismal refuge at

His coming down the dingy aisle of Time
 Wrap up the scroll of sorrow past and let
 Sweet Lethe take all its memories.

Exit Helen.

Augusta—A ray of light so pure and sweet
 That makes the deepest darkness visible ;
 The ruin of my life seems less a ruin in
 Her company, as when the tallest pines
 Are tipped with golden beams, relieves, in part,
 The blackness of the shadowed vale below ;
 O, destiny ! suage down this irony
 Of fate and glint my hopes of life again.

Exit.

Act 3, Scene 2. Same.

Enter Helen.

Helen—Well,
 That splendid woman has departed for
 The peace of childhood's home,
 And may she find a solace there
 Sweet as the lyrics of old Lesbos,
 But now I'll to my task of rescue
 Circumspect and cautiously,
 And so, discretion, backed by flinty nerves,
 Must ever keep me dogged company ;
 I did observe his cell had but loose boards
 Across its level top for cover—

Near the prison lay a ladder
 Light and long,
 This I can secure and while the guard
 Tramps round the measured beat, will lean against
 His cell, this handy rounder,
 Taking all the chances of discovery,
 I'll make a rush to reach its shaky roof,
 Here's my chisel and a hammer for
 The cutting of the cuffs that manicle
 His arm and foot to length of clanking chain.
 This little jaunt may hazard much,
 But, then, success without a hazard,
 Surely should be salted down to keep
 The skippers out of it.
 The jeer and grin may bandy my attempt
 And modesty flare out her jeweled hand,
 But where devotion calls for action in
 Defense of those we love unbidden will
 Sets pride and sickly sentiment aside,
 As when a storm breaks up the placid face
 And hum-drum murmur of the sea.

Exit.

Act 3, Scene 3. Before the Prison.

Enter Helen.

Helen—Here's the ladder, opportune
 Now for the scale

(Puts ladder against the prison wall; scales; guard approaches; moves boards, raises, lowers ladder inside, and descends.)

Sidden (talking in his sleep)—

So, inhuman jailer, you declare
The game is up with me, and that I shall
Not see her face again!
My love, my life! Is there no refuge from
This thralldom worse than death?
Could I but see that face again and soothe
The agony of her ruined life,
Perhaps she would be comforted.

Helen—Dearest Will,

Your wish is gratified herein truth.
I kneel before you. May we never part
Again.

Seddon—What is this?

Hallucination! Am I going mad?

Helen—Not a bit of it, my dear.

I'm here as real as the stones you rest
Upon, and come to set you free.
Here's my chisel, hammer and a file.
Hold out your hand, and I will cut the chain,
And set your limbs at liberty.

Seddon—By what spell, our urging potency,
Induced your coming here?

Helen—No spell but that of love;

No potency but love and will to dare.
 But, then, there is no time for sentiment.
 Hold down the chain upon this iron bolt,
 And with this chisel and my hammer I
 Will sever it.

(Strikes with the hammer, making much noise.)

Seddon—Hold, my dear!
 This noise will start the guards, and pounce
 They will upon you like a terrier
 A kitten most defenseless.
 If loosed, I could not go with you, because
 A charge of breaking jail would lodge against
 Us both. Besides, we could not possibly
 Escape the country undetected.
 Innocence cannot afford to break
 A manacle. It is the guilty that
 Attempts escape.

Helen—Ah, truly so!
 I see my folly in this rash attempt,
 And trust you will forgive it.

Seddon—Forgive is not the word,
 But praise the longest day I live for nerve
 That faced the undertaking.
 Now get thee hence, my noble one, and if
 You reach the outer world in safety,
 Devoted memory will place you on
 A pedestal enthroned forever as

A lover's talisman.

The clock strikes three, and now
The eyelids of the morning lift apace;
So let the balance of the waning night
Full hood your face and eyes, which ever light
The darkness of my present life.

Exit Helen.

Act 3, Scene 4. A Room in the Hotel.

Enter Helen.

Helen—In that bout I set my picket line
So near the camping enemy
That caution urged retreat.
But still my midnight raid upon this den
Was not a dismal failure, after all.
I saw my cope, and he admired my
Resolve and pertinacity.
That is enough of glory for a month,
And on it will I make an epic.
For an everlasting memory.
Where stand I now, and what the drift
Of other work in that direction?
Here's the Carson Appeal. Perhaps it has
A place for me.
Yes, good fortune brings it in
The nick of time. (Reads :)
Wanted—A first-class cook, competent

To take charge of the kitchen at the
 Warm Springs prison.
 Apply to Abram Curry, on the grounds.
 This will bring me near the one I love,
 As does the instinct of a cooing dove
 To mate that's caged most cruelly.
 It gives, beside, an opportunity
 To show my handiwork.
 My mother—bless her loving soul!—
 Did drill me in the art of keeping house
 For many years.
 Dishes did we conjure up that had
 No name in decalogue of epicures,
 And whet anew the keenest appetite.
 Yes, I'll try the place!
 In fact, I must do something, for my purse
 Is but the shadow of a substance gone,
 And scarce will pay my bill to date.
 But then mishap hath given me acquaintance there,
 Perhaps in measure quite embarrassing.
 Contempt of angled eyes would look so high
 With stretch of neck that doors would lose their caps
 In passing that array of squinting wonder.
 So dress I will, and paint and fix to make
 A Bridget of myself.
 But this great mass of golden hair is in
 The way of biddy making.
 O! thou great glory of my childhood,

And pride of larger womanhood!
 I must then shear my ample treasure.
 Necessity is law unto herself,
 And sentimental qualms burn down to dross,
 When destiny forefronts with rigid play.
 The fates decree it, so here goes (cuts off her hair).
 How stale and lank the little tokens of
 A woman's love appear, when duty calls
 For action through a bugle in her soul!
 There! I think that make-believe will do.
 My mother would disown me in this garb;
 And rouge legitimate would blush to see
 The dopes upon my face.

Exit.

Act 3, Scene 5. Prison Office.

Enter Helen.

Helen—Is Misthur Curry in?

Curry—That's my name.

What can I do for you?

Helen—Will, if you plaze, I come to say about the place advertised in the papers.

Curry—Do you mean the notice for a cook?

Helen—Sure, and that's for what I come.

Curry—Do you seek the place for yourself?

Helen—If it is agrayable, sur.

Curry—Do you think you can fill it?

Helen—I do indade, sur.

Curry—Were you ever in a state prison?

Helen—An' do you take me for a thafe, Misther Curry?

Curry—I do not mean that, but have you had any experience in prison life?

Helen—Faith, an' how cud I have any expariance in prison life unliss I be a thafe, a house-breaker or a big-amist?

Curry—That's easy. I've been in prison many months, yet never committed a crime.

Helen—An angel, then, surely you are, Misther Curry, for the good book says there was niver a mother's son without sin.

Curry—Oh, well, I can assure you I am not a saint, but never have been convicted of wrongdoing.

Helen—That is quite common, sur; for the law's perversion makes many a thafe a church deacon who has a face for Sunday an' one for other days.

Curry—Then you think the laws are bad?

Helen—Never a bit, but the divil sames to preside over the jury box and judge so often that these poor fellas sometimes convict the wrong man, and let the thafe with a stovepipe go fray.

Curry—The lawyers are largely to blame for such miscarriage of justice.

Helen—Yis, but thin, sur, they are only human, an', like the big prachers, are allus called where the largest

fays and salaries are obtainable. The trouble is we all are made of different strakes of mud, intermingled with good and ill is such a way that charity should fill each soul with sympathy and mete out punishment to those who err with justice tempered largely with the tinder hand of mercy.

Curry—Well, we have not time to build new castles for the temple of philosophy. Let evolution do its work, and we our little part of it.

My wish is knowledge of your cookery.

Helen—My tongue is not a braggart bast to prate of what I know. I only wish you give me trial, sur, and if I cannot cook the round from little herring up to steaks of nine-horned elk, you may declare me cheat, unworthy of your further care.

Curry—What is your name?

Helen—Betty Maloney, sure.

My grandmither was second cousin to the thirty-third gineration of Saint Patrick's footman.

Curru—Well, Miss Maloney, I am disposed to try you, and if found as pert in work as tongue I think our engagement wili be endurable. Come this way, and view the color of your opportunity.

Exit.

Act 3, Scene 6. Kitchen of Prison.

*Enter Curry and Betty.**Curry*—Sing, this is Betty Malona.

She chief cook of the kitchen. Do whatever she tell you without question. This is Lena, Miss Maloney; the helper. I hope you will agree, and shall expect the meals on time.

Exit Curry.

Betty (inspecting the place)—Dirt, dirt, distressingly, and unadulterated with a single spot of common decency. What a task and what distemper had I in seeking it. But the die is cast, and die I will or do the job in measure credible. I'll burnish up these dingy walls with scrubbing brush, skins, flower cuts and evergreens, arranged in such a way as to make the place inhabitable. Sing, will you bring in some wood. Lena, these are awful dirty rags. Will you wash them, please.

Sing (aside to Lena)—Me no like wolm,
 She too muchy dalm smart—run this
 Way, then runny this way. Me too muchy
 No sabby Ilishman.
 Lena, so, so. She no good, I no mine
 Her. She no like one Spanish senorita.

Enter Mr. Mooney (the steward, singing.)

Dear Erin, thy lasses are charming
 As blithely they rake in the hay;

Laughing while aiding the farming,
And blushing like roses of May.

Sweet Erin, the fairest and greenest,
A gem on the lap of the sea,
With wit of thy people the keenest,
O Erin, I sing one to thee.

Enter Sing (with a load of wood.)

Mooney—Oh, oh! you blasted hathen,
You've ruined me toes!
Take that, an' that! (Striking Sing with a whip)
And you that! (Striking Lena for laughing.)

Enter Betty.

Betty—Bar your whip, Mr. Mooney,
The Chinaman is not to blame.
'Twas your swagger that knocked the
Wood on yer toes.

Mooney—To blazes wid yer, woman!
Do yer mane to stand betwane me duty
And meself?

Betty—An' is it yer duty to bate people?

Mooney—Yis, when they nade it.
And thin a hathen Chinese is not people,
For he has no soul and has a bast for a
Mither, falls down to a wooden god
An' ates rats for a livin'.

Betty—'Tis not for the like of yez to
 Judge of papels souls, an' a hathen is
 One that acts hathenish, and a hathen
 Without brains could tell the hathen
 In this rumpus.

Mooney—Betty Maloney, an' does yez
 Take the part of a hathen fernist one
 Of yer own race and color?

Betty—I take the part of right, as I
 See it, whether it be in favor of a
 Hathen Chinese or a hathen Irishman.

Mooney—Betty Maloney, yer tongue
 Is sharper than an adder's tooth,
 An' its pison makes me green in
 Half a minute, so I'll bid the top of
 The morning to yez.

Exit Mooney.

Sing—You belly good wolm,
 Heap sabby. Him steward belly bad
 Man. Chinaman too muchy dalm
 Phule. No sabbv his mudder.
 You telle what do. Me wolkey alle
 Same as my bludder.

Enter Dr. Duff.

Dr. Duff—Here, Betty. I want some
 Warm water and rags. This boy has
 A broken arm, by the premature explosion
 Of a quarry blast, and the fracture

Is so bad that the member will
Have to be amputated.

Betty—With careful setting and nursing
Don't you think it might be saved, docther?

Doctor—Perhaps, but I have neither
Time nor patience to fool away half a day
In this case. Moreover, there is no one
Here to give him the care and nursing
Necessary.

Betty—Please, docther, place the child
In condition for nursing and I will
Do the rest.

Doctor—You know nothing of nursing
Mangled arms. Moreover, your place
Is in the kitchen to grub stake this
Institution.

Betty—Sure, an' I know that, docther,
But thin I have a little strake of humanity
Left wid me yet. The lad's sence
Is for small offense, an' soon he'll be
Free again. Then what can he do wid
One hand for a livin'?

Doctor—Pshaw, woman! You are altogether
Too tender hearted for a place like this.
When I was surgeon in the war with
Mexico I used to slash off arms and
Legs with no more concern for the result

Than you have in depriving a spring
Pullet of her bipeds. (Prepares for the cutting.)

Betty—Docther, have you a boy?

Doctor—Yes, about the age of this one.
But what is that of your concern?

Betty—If this lad was yours, would
You cut off his arm?

Doctor—No, certainly not, until every
Other remedy had proved ineffectual.
But this little renegade should not
Be mentioned in the same breath with
My boy. He is a fine, manly fellow,
In every way worthy of his father, while
This one is a felon, consequently should
Receive but little consideration, for his
Life is hardly worth preserving.

Betty—Docther, how does your boy's head
Compare with this one?

Doctor—In every way superior. Round,
Full, with every organ properly developed,
While this fellow has more the head of
An ape than a human. See its breadth
Between the ears, denoting large acquisitiveness
Conjoined with destructiveness, while
His flat pate, low, receding forehead and
Frontal narrowness indicate small intellect,
With almost total absence of reverence

And moral perception.

Betty—Docther, is the boy to blame
For his mental and physical make-up?

Doctor—Well, I can't say he is.
The origin of some of his mental
Deficiencies probably run back through
The blood of generations, but then the
Guiding hands and influence of home
Should check and sway obedience
In a youth like this.

Betty—But then, perhaps, he had no
Home in truth nor mother's care to check
The criminal predominate and guide him
From the evil way.

Doctor—God help him, then, or drift
He must to deeper depths of sin.

Betty—The Lord helps none that cannot
Help themselves, so when a crater is warped
And dwarfed by circumstances out of its
Control, the only hope of betterment
Must come from those who were from
Circumstances better born and raised.
Methinks Divinity did so intend,
And all the prates of strutting consequence
Will not relieve them from this duty
In the sight of God.

Doctor—You talk severely, woman, of

People better than yourself! Curb
 Your flying tongue and learn submissively
 That place and wealth control all
 Kingdoms of the world, make respectability
 And mentor society without a skip in
 Human destiny.

Betty—I know that many people hug
 This shekel god, as does the Devil
 Fondle with his ugly tail.
 But Christ taught otherwise, and broke
 His bread amog the lowly, where now
 Are found his truest followers, who give
 Of their mite to charity with loving hearts,
 Which in the sight of God outweigh great
 Gifts bestowed with ostentation.
 The treasures of this world are surely
 Found in little helps, that lift a brother
 From the ruts of his discouragement,
 And with a tender word point upward
 For a greater consolation.
 This boy does seem misfortune's child,
 And shall we help him to a greater
 One by cutting off his arm?
 Does duty to humanity point that
 Way? If your own boy had no other
 Way of making a living but by his
 Hands, would you sever them with
 Heartless unconcern?

Donor—Your words are well worded,
 Sweetened with the depths of kindly
 Sentiment, they place the glowing coils
 Among my memories, yet hold the
 Balm in Gilead to the wounded and
 Bid me choose between the stream of
 Living water and the burning lake where
 Conscience bath acquaintance
 Painful are the lessons so I shall
 Follow your suggestion and save
 The boy's arm.

Betty—May the blessing of Saint Patrick
 Fall upon you, brother, for this resolve!
 Here's the wether and the rags—Set the limb
 And I will do the rest.

Exit Donor and Betty.

Enter Warden Curry.

Curry—Betty, we have another bad
 Case that needs your immediate
 Attention.

Betty—And what is it now, Mister
 Curry?

Curry—It is a fa young convict,
 Very low with typhoid fever, and
 If not carefully nursed can not live
 Three days.

Betty—Faith, an' I'm always ready!

To help a poor crater. Where will I find
Him, Mister Curry?

Curry—In the new stone cell to
The right, on the way to the quarry,
Not yet roofed in.

Betty (in great agitation)—My God, is it
He?

Curry—He? Who? What's the matter,
Woman, are you ill?

Betty (sitting down)—Yes. Give me some
Water, Lena.

Excuse me for this weakness. Mither
Curry, for sure me heart is so
Tinder for the distressed that I
Fale all gone like whin I hear
Of a new case.
Where's the kav to the cell, Mither
Curry?

Curry—Here it is—but remember
I will hold you responsible should
The prisoner escape while the key
Is in your possession.

Betty—An' do you think a man
Is trying to run away with a low faver?

Curry—But he may get better.

Betty—In the name of all the saints
May it be so.

Exit Curry.

Yes, it is Will Sidden, my own,
 Dying in that cold, damp cell where
 I visited him that black, dismal night
 Four weeks since.

O cruel fortune, hide me from
 Myself and dull the pangs of memory
 Capped with this last great sorrow.
 When once the poise of simple life
 Is loose and drifts the tide of
 Fortune toward the Stygian Sea, how vain
 Appears the struggle with environments
 That hedge and blacken all the
 Horizon of hope.

But those who love can never lag in
 Duty to the living, though grief takes
 Off the edge of every pleasure.
 So melancholy shall not bind me
 To his dismal car, for conscious duty
 Well performed will strengthen ever faithful
 Heart until the stars go down.
 And when they fail there surely is
 Reward for noble work beyond their setting.
 Come, Lena; let us seek that adamant
 Cell, where life does flicker as a lamp
 Untrimmed and death is hanging up
 His sable curtain.

Exit Betty and Lena.

Enter Curry.

Curry—Sing, where's the cook?

Sing—Gone to see one plissner,
Velly sick.

Curry—Everything very nice now, Sing?

Sing—Heap sabbe, velly good
Wolum, alle same as one angel.
See, see, see. (*Sing shows Curry around.*)

Curry—Does she scold you?

Sing—Scole me? Alle same as one
Kitten. She say Sing, wille you do
This? Den she looke me, an' her eye
Make one litning go alle way down to
My toe. I no sabbe. She say, Sing,
You go to hebben. I climb rite up
To the top of house. She say, Sing,
You go to de debble. I go hang myself.
Me dunno. Me no sabbe wolum. She
'Talk sweet an' smile. Me my bres' go thump-
ta-thump alle same as one fool Melican
Man. Me dunno. Me no sabbe.
She no Ilish wolum—hep smart
Vely good. Me dunno.

Enter Betty and Lena.

Curry—Well, Betty, how's the sick
Man?

Betty—Bad indade, sur, an' will
Surely die, the docther says, unless
Removed from the din in which
He is confined.

Have you not a better place to
Give him, Misther Curry, plase?

Curry—I think of nothing for improvement.

Betty—Then may the good Lord help
His soul, for he's surely lost.

Curry—Oh, yes; I have it.
Pat Mooney's room is vacant since
His discharge. The one with the
Dormer window, second story, adjoining
The chapel facing the court.
You may have the patient taken up
There.

Betty—May you live a thousand
Years for this kind favor, Misther
Curry; be as happy as the saints
And have a friend for every leaf
That rustles in the wind.
Come, Lena.

Exit Betty and Lena.

Curry—By my soul, this woman is a
Strange creature. In the garb of ignorance
And drudgery, yet withal the kindest
Heart I ever knew.

How near is all humanity together—
 When the sordid selfishness, begotten
 By the pride of place or circumstance
 Is torn asunder through misfortune.
 Assuredly there is divinity in man.
 But those who worship place, or Mammon
 As a god, perhaps engendered by their
 Antecedents or the fear of want,
 Have by degrees wound about themselves
 A robe of selfishness so dense
 That penetration is impossible
 Short of great calamity.
 While a simple child of nature
 Like this girl, unwarped by hollow mockeries
 Of pride, nor poisoned by the fangs
 Of ostentation, carries heaven in her
 Bosom daily, and as the sun that
 Has no partiality, beams on the utmost
 Of the world benignantly.
 When will we learn humility and measure
 The value of each soul by the good
 That from it emanates?

Exit.

Act 3, Scene 7. Garden and Prison Grounds.

Enter Betty, Lena and Dr. Duff.

Doctor—A glorious morning. Miss Maloney,
 The sun hath put a golden robe on all

The trees and every flower opens out
 Its heart in adoration of the One
 Who gave them life and stamina of kind
 And flushed their many colors with a brush
 Divinely charged.

Betty—Beautiful conception, yet my sense
 Is blind, while anxious care encompass me
 With wraps the deepest sable.
 How seems the prisoner, enchained
 By death's great envoy?

Doctor—Better, most decidedly.
 The climax of the case has passed
 And consciousness returning slowly, as
 A wanderer from land of fantasies.
 The baffled monster is now gathering up
 The remnants of dominion lost for flight
 To other fields and pastures new.

Betty—Sweet heaven!
 How thy glory smiles upon the earth
 And all the world seems beautiful to me,
 As when a rainbow spans a somber cloud.
 Come, Lena, to the chapel service, where
 On this peaceful Sabbath we will praise
 The Giver of all Good and prone the knee
 In humble invocation.

Exit Betty and Lena.

Doctor—What a woman she does seem to me,

The living image of a servant, yet
 A soul center of the beautiful
 In thought and action.
 How strange it is we know so little of
 Ourselves and less of those about us!
 The sweetest harps are strung by nature,
 Ready to the hand of him who comprehends
 He is a part and hath relationship to all
 The universe and that each soul is from a
 Common source and intermingle in another
 World, with light and shade to fix their several
 Antecedents, jeweled with their crowns of worth
 Or ragged in their desolation of neglected
 Opportunity in singing heaven's symphonies
 And helping one another to better lives.

Act 3, Scene 8. Sidden's Sick Chamber.

(Singing in the distance.)

Pure are the sweet waters flowing
 In the haven prepared for the blest,
 Where the Lebanon cedars are growing
 And the vines of the kingdom are dressed.

Fear not the dark shadows dividing
 Time from eternity's home;

With faith and uprightness abiding,
 Take courage, my brother, and come.

Farewell, God's glory is growing,
 As soul from mortal does sever;
 Farewell, Lethe's river on is flowing,
 That bears us on forever.

Enter Dr. Duff.

Doctor—Will Sidden,
 You have baffled Atrapos,
 Winged the clutch of Eacus
 And all distempers mortal.

Enter Betty and Lena.

And next to heaven you should truly thank
 This walking wonder for relief.
 Her name is Betty Maloney, chief cook,
 Mellow sunlight in these prison walls.
 And, withal, a wonderful woman in
 Her way.

Siddon—Am I not indebted to you, doctor, for
 The favorable turn my case has taken?

Doctor—To the value of a pin, perhaps;
 But medicine at best is but an aid
 Of small account compared to nursing such
 As hers, when Circe sat with you on the edge
 Of time.
 For several days I strove unlaggingly
 To keep you from the sleep of Endymion,
 When like Medea came this wonder,
 Wooing you to life again.

Siddon—Then heaven bless you evermore,
 Good soul, and when of poise and strength again
 I will reward your ministry as best
 I can, and carry with me to the grave
 Remembrance of the service rendered.
 But soft. The doctor has a finger up
 That bids me company with Hippocrates,
 So peace be with you, let me reach again
 That border land where late I wandered
 Long, a silent river, darkened at
 Its border; lashing not, her murmur like
 The ocean; neither could I hear the current
 Rippling, yet could feel its influence
 As one does, sore and weary with
 His pilgrimage, seeks a silent sail
 Or ferryman to go he knows not where—
 At last, fatigued beyond endurance longer,
 I heard a voice across the mystic stream
 singing:

Fear not dark shadows dividing
 Time from eternity's home;
 With faith and uprightness abiding,
 Take courage, my brother, and come.

It seemed to me there could be
 No mistake this time. Surely it was
 The voice of my beautiful Helen on
 The other side encouraging my coming.
 So I boldly stepped off in the black

Flood, but the water was so cold and
 The sensation so strange that my eyes
 Were opened and I found myself here.

Doctor—Well, the moment you reached
 That dark, cold stream and in imagination
 Hear sweet music was that
 In which the soul was trembling on
 The brink of eternity.
 Now the climax has passed, and with
 A little care you will soon be
 Yourself again.

Exit Doctor, Betty and Lena.

Act 3, Scene 9. Prison Kitchen.

Enter Betty (Sing and Lena in background.)

Betty—And so he recognized my voice
 And thought me on the nether shore,
 Inviting him to hither come.
 If we were there in truth perhaps it
 Would be consolation for us both.
 For life seems but a troubled dream
 At best, with here and there light
 Glimpses of a hope beyond.
 He's well again and now its bruited
 About the wards that on the morrow
 He will be compelled to take his
 Place in line as quarry slave and

Bend to toil and stripes at will
 Of some great ruffian.
 So to-day will be the last I'll see
 Of him perhaps for months.
 What shall I do or whither go?
 This agony of mind doth gnaw
 The heart away and make a charnel
 House of my existence.
 High heaven, where is thy justice?
 O hell, display assortment
 Of thy miseries, that I may
 Recognize wherein is woe and sorrow
 Worse than this.
 Here I in happiness comparable
 Could drudge my life away, hedged
 About with all its dark environments,
 If this red blot of crimson upon his
 Hands could wash itself away
 In the crystal stream of truth
 Not yet revealed.
 But then this grief unbosomed to the stars
 Is vain and futile of relief
 For destiny seems sitting stolid in
 His car of state, and with an iron
 Finger bends and sways each human wish,
 As does a wind the trembling willow boughs.
 Yet, come what will, my thirst can never quench
 In stagnant waters passed.

The present is the door ajar for work
 And opportunity. To-morrow may
 Not come to me, and so this half-flown day
 Shall not brow on the border of the world
 Until I stand revealed to William Sidden.
 Wild may be this last resolve, but then
 It seems the only hope that's left me.

Act 3. Scene 10. Dining Room, Officers at Dinner.

Enter Betty with coffee pot.

Curry—I have a bit of news, Betty,
 That may concern you much.

Betty—What is it, Misther Curry?

Curry—Well, you will remember
 That fellow Sidden whom you saved
 From boxing and a funeral service.

Betty—Well, what of him?

Curry—He has been pardoned.

Betty—Pardoned! Pardoned, did you say?
 (Spiling the coffee.)

Curry—Well, not exactly. The Governor
 Has ordered Sidden's release, his innocence
 Of the crime charged having been
 Fully established.

Betty—Let me see the papers.

Curry—Here they are.

Betty (reading)—

Territory of Nevada—Executive Department.

To all whom these present come, greeting:

I, James W. Nye, Governor of Nevada Territory in the name and by the authority of the people of said Territory, do by these presents declare: That it having come to my knowledge through the dying confession of one Lo Lorenzo, coupled with ample corroborative testimony to establish the fact that said Lo Lorenzo was the actual murderer of Jerry Jessup, killed in Virginia City, April 29, 1859, for which crime William Sidden was apprehended, tried, convicted and sentenced to a term at hard labor, and is at this time serving out the sentence of the court.

Therefore, in consideration of the facts above stated, I hereby direct Abram Curry, Warden of the Territorial Prison under his charge, to immediately release from confinement and set at liberty the person of William Sidden.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the great seal of said Territory to be affixed at Carson City this 24th day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two.

JAMES W. NYE,

Governor of Nevada Territory.

Attest:

ORION CLEMENS,

Secretary of State.

Sweet Heaven!

This shaft of glory shatters all
Our chains and arches space with
Hanging rainbows.

Mr. Curry, may, may I take this
Paper to the prisoner please?

Curry—Surely, if you wish, but
Still my duty bids me follow you.

Exit Betty, Curry and Officers.

Act 3, Scene 11. Siddon's Room.

Enter Betty and Officers.

Betty—Oh, Will, you are pardoned! No, not pardoned, but set at liberty, because your innocence has been fully established.

Siddon—Are you really in earnest, Betty?

Betty—Certainly. Here's the papers. See for yourself. Dear Will, how happy I am to know you are free and not a blemish on your noble name.

Siddon—Well, Miss Malona, I am under obligations for your care and kind consideration, but——

Betty (hysterically laughing)—And Miss Malona, is it sure? (Running to a basin in the corner, washing off the paint, doffing gown and wig, shaking out her six-inch curls; turning to the astonished Siddon in a blaze of joy and beauty.)

How now, good soul?

Can coons and speckled leopards change their skins,
Or painted woman have a soul within?

Siddon—Oh, apparition of the blest!
Do I dream, or does reality
Hedge the border of my visions with
A form that hath not prototype in all
The world?

Helen—No dream affects the mortal sight,
But substance real—pith of womanhood.
Your own devoted Helen sure, and once
The apple of your eye.

Siddon—Yea, more; the consolation of my heart,
And hope of all my future years.
To-night I'll hang a lamp of mellow light
Among the stars, and beg sweet Venus guard
It there forevermore as talisman
For every one who dares to love and die,
If need be, in defense of it.

Curry—This ends the roll of your adventure,
Leaving the prison desolate and cookless.
Here are the wages for the term you've
Served, and grateful memory from
Every soul within these walls that hold
The obduracy of the state.
And, Siddon, here's your couterments,
Gleaned when you entered here.
Among the lot I find you have

Just fifty shares of Ophir stock.
 Each share is worth five hundred dollars.
 Sell it soon, for Comstock kings
 Who lord it in this land, can make
 Or break the market in a day,
 And turn to tramps the common herd
 Of buckers at the royal tiger.

Exit Curry and Officers.

Siddon—How sudden is this change!
 It staggers sense to recognize my
 Own identity, and like a top my head
 Runs round upon my shoulders.
 What shall we do, my love, and whither go?

Helen—If two are twain, and pledged troth,
 With hearts that beat as one, with fortune
 At the door and home awaiting them,
 What would you in a like affair propose?

Siddon—Marriage. Surely nothing else
 Can fill the aching void in such lives.
 So, come. The parson's ministry we'll seek;
 Then cash my stock, and speed away to old
 Kentucky for a honeymoon.

Exit.

Act 4, Scene 1. Judge Dane's Home.

Enter Judge Dane, Wife and Augusta.

Judge Dane—Augusta, your sojourn here

Has been three months, and I have oft observed
 Your indisposition to mention home or
 Husband. What is the matter over
 The mountains?

Augusta—Much matter, father. I have
 Neither home nor husband any longer.

Judge Dane—What meanest thou by
 Such a speech as that?

Augusta—Mr. Winton, jealous of a shadow
 Finding lodgment in the ricket of
 The nerves to such extent that hoodoos hatched
 Full-fledged in his disordered mind,
 Did crawl between us like so many
 Skeletons enwrapped in mummy cloth,
 And there they lay so near his little heart,
 With whispering of things that happened not,
 Until the serpent green had mirked
 His manly vision in a way that lost
 The anchorage of balanced sanity.
 Then, with a rasping speech, most low and foul,
 He plied the dregs of ribaldry until
 The compass of my destiny did run
 Its needle round the digit stretch, and yet
 Oscillates without a resting place.

Judge Dane—Tut, woman! Turn
 Your tongue to better counsel with
 Yourself, and dragnet all these

Flashy minnows from your speech.
 Patience hath no monument on which
 To sit in this affair, so bottle up
 Your umbrage, cork it down with common sense,
 And, with contrition, set about your pack
 Of things you wish returning home.

Augusta—I have not semblance of
 A home, if forced beyond your threshold;
 For home is where the best affections are,
 And linked with golden chain to those we love.
 I am content to be your kitchen drudge,
 Run the needle, spin the glossy flax,
 Scrub, or lather dirty linen, but
 To be made slave and jibe at one fell swoop
 Seems pitiless in he who thus ordains.
 Your will to me has ever been as law,
 And more I have, as satellite about
 Its central hold.
 I pray you not dispel affinity,
 For the aberration of a soul
 That loses hope is lost indeed.
 So, as a child to this brink, dutiful,
 I do beseech you give me leave to plead,
 And with indulgence hear my tale of woe.

Judge Dane—No, Augusta. As defendant in
 This suit now rest your case.
 The judgment of the court is that
 You do forthwith return to threshold of

Your husband, sue for peace, and make
 It possible by gentle will and breadth
 Of condescension ever manifest.

Mrs. Dane—Augusta is within the pale
 Of woman's right, and I do dare to
 Succor her.

Your words are cold and caustic to
 The ear, and oft I've felt their
 Grinding force from heart to fingers' ends,
 Yet curbed my temper for a patched-up
 Peace, but is a woman but a whiff
 Of ribbons blown about by every wind,
 Who dares not say her soul's her own?
 And that she has a modicum of pride
 And conscience deeper than the wraps
 About her form?

Now, if the child cannot a wife to
 Winton be, let the tide of her great
 Sorrow ebb and flow about her early home.
 This checkered life is bad enough at best,
 Then why gad and wound a grief
 When consolation heals the rankest sore?
 'Tis true that this affair may lose us
 Pride, but pride hath never far to fall
 That wrings a heart for blood to sate
 Its own distemper in.

Judge Dane—How now? Such pique
 Is new to me! An angel turned to

Wormwood in its age, with darting
 Tongue that stirs the marrow in my
 Bones, and flurries up my wonted dignity!
 'Tis enough! I've said that back she must
 To husband go. So prepare for transit
 On the morrow.

Exit all.

Act 4. Scene 2. A Street in San Francisco.

Enter Happy Jack (singing).

Her eyes are like the stars of evening,
 Set in the azure of the deep.
 Where angels hover while receiving
 Prayer to God from those who weep.

Her form is lovely, art-consuming,
 Chiseled Greek and Venus pose.
 With health in all her features beaming,
 Mingled lily with the rose.

Her footprint shames a Cinderella:
 Breathes she sweetness full and warm.
 Without a gist of bright prunella,
 Lives she faultless as a charm.

Enter Berring.

Berring—Hello, Jack, you sawing boards again?
 Such harmony will set the street astir
 With grinning teeth, and stop the mellow lay
 Of puddle frogs to hear a brother sing.

When wits are out a fellow soon may lose
 A jaw with hollow stuff like that.
 You surely come on other business here.
 What have you learned of fair Augusta,
 And her future plans?

Happy Jack—My work has been propitious, for
 I caught the housemaid on the hip with mock
 Of dainty compliment, and making of
 Myself her shadow, when she wished
 Unstinted service, so to such extent
 Did I get in her simple graces that
 The very knot-holes in the Judge's house
 Have given up their secrets freely as
 A blabber in the market-place.

Berring—Well, let the jingo go. Give me the facts.

Happy Jack—Augusta, gloomy, silent as the halls
 Of ruined castle, moves about as does
 A phantom nursing its own misery.
 Thus weeks have passed with her like train
 Of tramping mourners with a bier!
 But yesterday there came a change,
 As when the toiling sea does long contrive
 To keep an equipoise, a storm brews on
 Its face, and all its depths do tremble on
 The brink of desolation.

Berring—Cut off the woolly length of this
 Fantastic tale, and let me have the pith

And marrow of your mouthing.

Happy Jack—The pith of it is this :
 The Judge, like some great walking-beam,
 Unused to let or hindrance, got down
 To business in Augusta's case.
 With look and mien, foster brother to
 A thunderbolt, goared down into her heart
 To find the cause why she had lingered there,
 So long unmindful of her marriage vow.
 When told the reason, and the ruin wrought
 Within her home by green-eyed jealousy,
 And hence the flight to seek her mother's arms—
 The master with a bluster like the wind
 When cornered in a wheezing calliope,
 Bid his daughter pack her scanty srip
 And be prepared to board the ferry in
 The morning, for the sapphire city.
 Thence to Sacramento, on the way
 To home in bleak Nevada.

Berring—Where stop they in this haste?

Happy Jack—It is not eked with certainty,
 Yet dignity and love of trapping show
 Swell dinner, Dane and daughter at the Lick.
 But be thou wary, Berring, people talk,
 And calumny doth scent you in the breeze.

Berring—Ah, people talk, I know it well,
 And hell doth blaze with its effrontery.

The tongue of slander murks the work of God
 And gives an appetite for garbage rotten ;
 For envy is a monster bred so foul
 And nurtured in the lap of littleness,
 That innuendo is the end it feeds upon,
 And washes virtue with its slimy brush,
 Bathed in a cup of gall.
 Its serpent fang strikes in the sweetest flesh
 And drips its rankness covertly upon
 The heart of purity, that with its help
 The venom of the damned may poison all
 The beauty of the world.

Happy Jack—Aye, sir ;
 You strike home with your burning words
 And coin a medal worthy of the ghouls
 You neck it on !

Exit Happy Jack (singing) :
 All is well that's ending well,
 And virtue has its innings ;
 The Devil has a world to sell,
 Obtained by small beginnings.

Berring—However compromising this affair
 May seem, I have no thought of ill ;
 It surely is commendable to choose
 A noble woman as a friend, else what
 Is friendship but a mockery?
 To see a creature wronged that more deserves

A favor, does in compassion worry me.
 Not an inch beyond decorum have
 I gone ; and since suspicion's foulest breath
 Hath caused her casting off, shall I stand here
 Like a mummy petrified with fear
 And see the life crushed out of her?
 No, not if all the devils in the land
 Shall hack at me.
 At least I'll see her ere she goes, and give
 A word of council in this trying hour.
 Perhaps I can suggest solution that
 Will turn the tables in this game of chance.

Exit.

Act 4, Scene 3. Hotel Parlor.

Enter Judge Dane and Augusta.

Judge Dane—Here, Augusta, is your
 Ticket. The boat leaves Washington-street wharf
 For Sacramento at four o'clock.
 A hack will be at the hotel door at
 Three-thirty to take you and baggage
 Down.
 Now, all things having been arranged
 For your departure, and since the last
 Boat crossing the bay leaves at three
 O'clock, giving me only half an hour
 To reach it, I must now bid you

Good-bye.
 May God bless and restore you
 To your home and husband.

Exit Judge Dane.

Augusta—In the desolation of this hour
 Do I dream, or has reality
 Burnt out the hope of happiness to come?
 An outcast and a ruined wife without
 A fault of mine.
 'Tis true that little molehills of the mind
 Oft grow to mountains, when the balance of
 A faith is lost through jealousy or warp
 Unnatural by process least
 Expected, and realization comes of such
 Calamities, we then review the past
 And see wherein there was a scanty chance
 Of betterment if taken on the slips.
 But now it is too late to remedy
 The past or weep for that which might have been.
 So I will smother breathings of this sort
 And take resignedly the tenor of
 My seeming destiny, and always hope
 The favor of stern Atropos.

Enter Berring.

Berring—I beg indulgence for
 This rude intrusion on your privacy,
 But hearing of your soon departure for
 Nevada, and wishing for a word before

You go, I venture thus presumptuously.

Augusta—This bash of yours surprises me
Amazingly, and breaks decorum in
The teeth of time.

Berring—I do concede the manner of
My coming is a lag in etiquette,
But ill can hardly have lodgment where
Ill is least intended.
Friend should surely counsel with a friend,
When clouds obscure the dusky horizon
And agony of soul seeks solace in
A friendly word.

Augusta—Your speech is surely sensible,
And since I stand upon the dangerous
Border of uncertainty, with pits
On every hand that bode me sorrow, I
Can hardly wish your presence gone,
Though primed propriety hardly sanctions it—
What have you of advice to offer me?

Berring—I thank you for this opportunity,
And shall no bing of alum offer you,
But rather balm of time to heal the wound
That heartless usage hath imposed.
We will not haggle over what has passed,
A sore that's often probed will never heal;
The best is but to scab it over with
Forgetfulness, and assuage the fever on

Its border with the oil that flows from faith
 In God, with thoughts of duty uppermost.
 While beauty of a woman, coupled with
 The sweetest worth and chastity are held
 In high esteem by all the good and true,
 Yet there is often heaped upon her head
 By gibbering ghouls a thousand importunities.
 And in this amplitude of worth rests your
 Offense, as owls hawk at the sun.
 A soul misjudged by yellow circumstance
 That flies its foul environments should not
 Recruit its ruin by returning.

Augusta—Then in this perturbed and sore
 Dilemma, do you counsel me to go
 Not over to Nevada?

Berring—As I would a gentle sister, thrawled
 And hedged about with villainies.

Augusta—Then whither shall I go?

Berring—To Europe.

Augusta—Impossible! I've neither friends
 Nor money for a trip like that.

Berring—I will furnish funds to round the trip
 And more; I have some trusted friends who go
 By steamer on the morrow for the East,
 Thence directly to the Continent.

Augusta—How can I brave a father's will?

Berring—A father's will is sacred to
 A loving child, but for a woman grown
 And lashed to raft that with a swing starts out
To sea, thonged there by her father's will,
 Hath she not in truth a human right
 To break her bonds and make escape?

Augusta—Perhaps. But then I cannot obligate
 Myself to you in way compromising
 For every big and little fish that bobbed
 About the straining boat would surely have
 A serpent's tongue to venom all the voyage.

Berring—Perhaps, but then I simply make the loan
 Of money necessary for the trip,
 To be returned at any time that suits
 Your least embarrassment, and be assured
 That not a digit of your smallest hair
 Shall owe me obligation.

Augusta—My child. What will become
 Of her?

Berring—She is now safe within your mother's fold,
 Which means a charge that wavers not an inch
 In duty to her blood.
 Will you go? I see you hesitate.
 And surely reasonable you should
 For prudence hangs upon your skirts and begs
 An interview, while justification
 Stands before, with scale unsteady in
 The doubtful balance, yet the die is cast

Not by your wish, but destiny is black
On any other road you turn.

Augusta—Your plea seems in a measure sensible
And most seductive, but the greatness of
The power wealth does give you places me
On short allowance of respect should you
But waver in fidelity of promise.

Berring—Ah, madam, much of money often is
A danger great. It represents a man
Or woman standing on the apex of
A monument, with one foot in the air
And sawing arms to keep its equipoise.
The only greatness comprehensible
To God is truth, which dwells forever in
His works and to each mortal manifest.
My word stands sacred in this case.

Augusta—Your proposal staggers me in sweep
And leaves me naught but words to lean upon,
With quicksands at my feet in which I bog
Distressingly.
When I would answer yes, there's tugging at
My conscience, forcing up a troubled no;
Memory revisits me and speaks
Of friends and relatives most deeply grieved
At thought of hazzard so uncommon.
While doubt in agony sits gloomy on
Its pedestal, with face tear-stained and eyes

All red with their weeping.

Berring—Accept the proffer, then,
And all the ill that comes of it shall be
My shadow while I live, and here and now
Will bond my soul and all possessions on
The earth that
All I say and all I give or do
Shall be as free from taint or selfish end
As welling water from the crystal springs
In paradise.

Augusta—Then I accept the proffered aid,
And here's my hand to bind my faith
In all you've said.

Berring—'Tis well, and good will come of it
If right is might in God's ordaining.
To-morrow I will call again to check
Your baggage at the wharf and see
You fairly off.

Exit all.

Act 4, Scene 4. San Francisco Dock.

(Passengers going aboard, parting of friends, ringing of bell.)

Steamer Mate—"All aboard for Panama."

Enter Augusta and friends, Sidden and wife.

"Down with the gangway,
Let go the stern line."

Mrs. Sidden (leaning on her husband's arm)
 Will, there sits a lady by the mast
 I have most surely seen before.

She seems in great distress, with eyeballs red
 And look that does betoken misery.
 May I, in sympathy, a word with her?

Sidden—Pshaw, my dear, the world is full of grief,
 And how can you assuage it with a word
 Or lullaby poured in a stranger's ear?
 A kitten with a tender foot would smile
 At your persistency in helping it.

Mrs. Sidden—Suppose you had a well
 That ran above its curb a flow of water.
 Wasting for lack of use, would you
 Deny a sip or two of it to some
 Poor thirsty soul?

Sidden—Not if I know myself.

Mrs. Sidden—Then why deny me like relief?
 Even little naiads, singing in
 The wooded streams, delight in charming those
 Who come to drink with them.

Sidden—Ah, well; who can argue with a charm
 Or bar confines to loving sentiment?
 Therefore I follow where you choose to lead.

Mrs. Sidden (approaching Augusta)—
 Pardon this intrusion,
 For your face suggests to memory

That I before have met you somewhere in
The world.

Augusta—Perhaps. All things seem possible
To one who's reached beyond its common sphere
Into the realm of impossibles.

Mrs. Sidden—If I mistake not your identity,
We met in Carson City several months
Ago, and lodged together in a room
In that old log-built hostelry.

Augusta—Yes, I do remember now,
Your name is Helen Jessup.

Mrs. Sidden—That was my name, but now it is
Mrs. Sidden; here's my better half.

Augusta—And changed you are
As does the dark and gloom of night
Into a rapture of delight,
That only morning can unfold
With beaming sun and glints of gold.

Mrs. Sidden—A shining compliment surely,
But then, when shadows lift and all the clouds
Are gone, why should the sun refuse to shine
Again? How fare you now, Augusta?

Augusta—As a rose that's withered, leaning on
A darkened wall, with scanty warmth of sun
Or hope of betterment.

Exit Sidden.

Mrs. Sidden—How glorious seems the closing day,
 With streaming light upon the level of
 The sea, sentineled by the fairy cloud
 In silver raiment near the horizon
 To ring the curtain down, when leaves the stage
 The burning eye of Ormuzed.

Augusta—Conception worthy of thyself, bright one,
 The light and glory of the world to thee
 Is emanation from your loving heart
 Without a shadow darker than a star.
 To me the blazing orb of day is but
 Distill of blood, absorbed from battlefields
 Of all the world, while standing still to view
 The carnage, and the rolling deep sings
 Requiems to hetacombs of dead
 Despoiled of life by her, that swing and rock
 Forever in their coral cradles.
 Heaven is a phantom ship that sails
 On summer seas, unlogged or baffled by
 Contrary winds,
 While hell is hope delayed and conscience
 Gnawing at the seat of memory.
 But then the past has sealed her casket full
 Of good and ill, and all the world of art
 Can not unlock it for recovery
 Of a single minute squandered
 At the sacrifice of duty.

Enter Doctor and many others.

Doctor—Ladies, we have another genuine Case of Asiatic cholera on board. It appears in the person of the lovely Little wife of Mr. Summerville, whose Body was consigned to the deep only a few Hours since. Is there a lady present Who will volunteer attendance When spasm and delirium seize The patient?

Augusta—Doctor, I am at your service. Please lead the way.

Mrs. Sneider (*Augusta's friend, aside*)—Dare you, Augusta, expose yourself To this contagion? Surely you will catch it and give it To the rest of us. Pray leave the doctor With his patient. What is she to you? A stranger pure and simple. If she dies Unaided, what of that? Her husband's Gone, and so she need not care to live.

Augusta—She is a woman and needs A woman's care. Is human nature so Ungainly in the sight of God that all This crowd of strut and primping beauties Shake and blanch with fear when sore Calamity does seek of them a helping hand?

If you were sick with like complaint
 And left to die among the captain's crew,
 What sort of blessing would you carry
 To your grave for all this fair array
 Of starch and paint and little souls?

Mrs. Sneider—Oh, that would be a
 Case unlike this one, for I have
 Friends and relatives on board who
 Would not let me die alone, but
 This sick woman neither has.

Augusta—So much her greater need
 Of stranger friends.
 Blood that's claret should be
 Thickened with a little human sympathy
 Or some such potent agency to manufacture
 Souls for them that would not
 Shame a Hottentot.
 It hath been truly said that man's
 Inhumanity to man makes countless
 Millions mourn. Man's inhumanity
 To woman is still more distressing;
 But the climax is capped by woman's
 Inhumanity to woman.

Exit all.

Act 4, Scene 5. Sick Room.

Enter Augusta.

Augusta—How are you, my dear?

Mrs. Summerville—Decidedly bad,
There seems to be no chance for me.

Augusta—Hope and persevere. (To attendant.)
Bring me broken ice
And tell the doctor send me ten grains
Of calomel rolled in a pill. Quick!

Mrs. Summerville—O let me die!
My husband calls beyond the river
At my feet.

Augusta—Did your husband love you?

Mrs. Summerville—Yes, of course he did.

Augusta—Did you love him?

Mrs. Summerville—Certainly.

Augusta—Were you not jealous of him?

Mrs. Summerville—Why, no indeed.

Augusta—And he had perfect confidence
in you?

Mrs. Summerville—Most assuredly he did.

Augusta—Are you quite sure he did not
Love some other one better than yourself?

Mrs. Summerville—Lord, woman!
How you talk. (Standing up.) What
Strange questions you do ask!
Who put such notions in your head?
Where did you learn anything
About myself and husband?
Where did you come from, anyhow?

Who are you? And what induced
Your coming here to wait on me?

Augusta—Sit down, my dear, and
I will tell you.

I came as nurse because you are
A woman and need a woman's
Assistance in your sickness.

My name is Augusta Winton, from
San Francisco, and on my way to Europe.
You are better now.

One more sip of this tonic, a little
More ice and you will be well.
There, that will do.

Exit.

(Rolling the patient from the room in a chair.)

Act 4, Scene 6. A Street in Paris.

Enter French Dancing Girl (sings):

The lovely Jemmy Flinkers,
With glasses on his blinkers,
I met him with the drinkers
On the banks of Salonell.
Salonell, Salonell,
On the banks of Salonell. (Dances.)

He said he was in love with me,
So would a loving husband be,
And dress me downward to the knee,
Upon the banks of Salonell.

Salonell, Salonell,
Upon the banks of Salonell.

(Dances off the stage.)

Enter Augusta and friends.

Augusta—I wonder why
I have not later news from home?
Full three months I've lingered here
For purpose indefinable,
With even Mr. Berring seemingly
Indifferent in the matter of
My lodgment.

Mrs. Sneider—Here he comes this moment.

Enter Berring.

Berring—I greet you all most lovingly.
And here's for you, Augusta,
A certificate from the County Clerk
Of Alameda County, California,
Setting forth the cause of action and
The court's decree annulling marriage
Vow of yourself to one Nelson W. Winton.

(Augusta reads the certificate copy.)

Now, Augusta, since there is
No longer legal bar between us,
May I not hope you'll give your little hand
And heart in it to me in marriage?

Augusta—I respect you highly, but
I doubt propriety of union such
As you propose, for I am not in love

To such extent as justifies a step
 So full of weal or woe.
 Time at least should be allowed
 For council ere it be too late.

Berring—Be it as you wish, Augusta, but
 In this way you hang a shadow in
 The horizon of hope, that harbingers ill
 To me and floors the ladder I had topped
 On coming here.

Augusta—You said on parting ere
 I journeyed hence that freedom in all things
 Should be to me unstinted as the sun,
 And that the money loaned to me should be returned
 At most convenient season.

Berring—True indeed, and truth
 Shall follow it to the last farthing.
 But then, as does a foolish boy
 Who undertakes to smoke a rabbit from
 The hay, I've fanned this little flame of mine
 Into a ruddy glow that threatens such
 A bonfire in my heart that water can
 Not quench, so if you mean to give me
 Moonshine for your solid self, perhaps
 It would be best to so declare before
 The ruin gets beyond control.

Augusta—Not so bad as that, I hope.
 It would be sad to start a pyre in
 And run to dross so much of manhood.
 In fact, I feel the binding force and strength

Of obligations great, and of all men
I think the most of you, but—

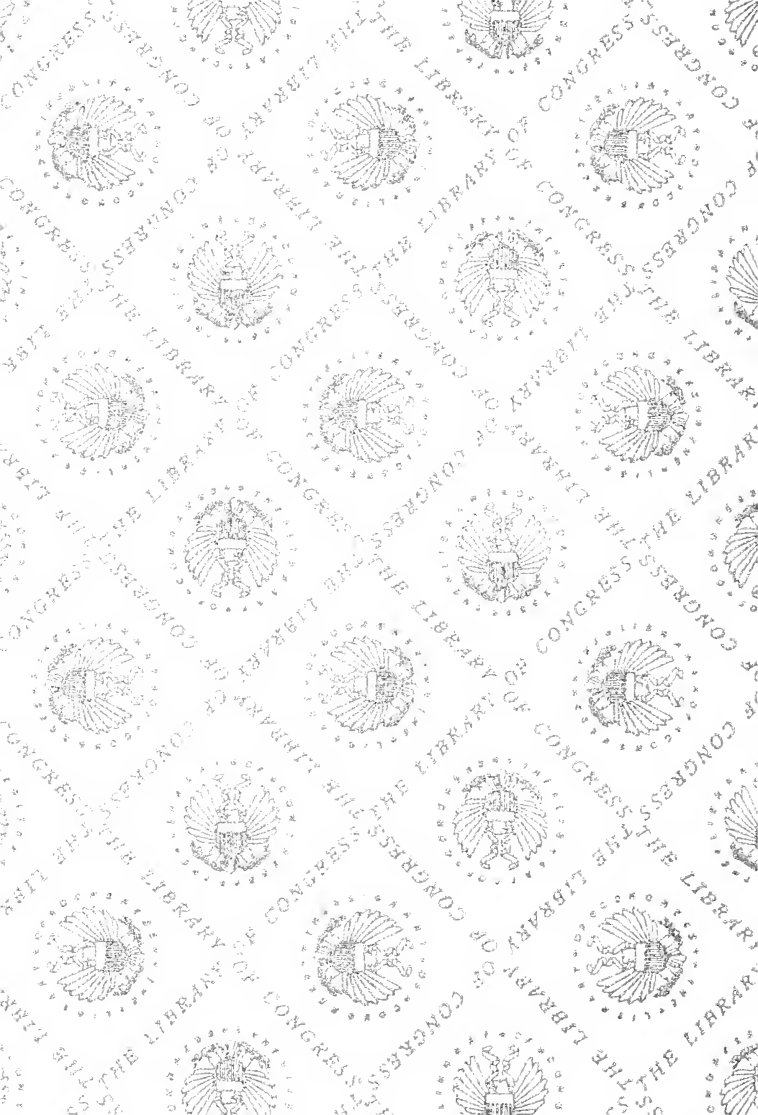
Berring—Forbear, Augusta. Not another word,
But let me warp the woof you've put into
The loom, and there will grow a web from threads
Of gossamer, more fair than fabric on
The shoulders of a Syrian queen.
It is expected by your friends and mine
That I shall bring you back in truth a wife,
To go without you gives to evil tongues
A morsel rolled delightfully into
A scandal jeweled off with ribaldry.
And how can I defend myself and you?
I'd have to put another face upon
Full half the mugs of that community
And leave inheritance of woe to you.

Augusta—I see you take this matter seriously,
And since you are the only manly hope
Which I have left, here is my hand and all
‘I have of heart with it.

Berring—Thy sweet words
Are mincemeat to the jaw of hunger,
Flavored with the oil of Rhodium.
Come, now, with friends
For unction of the ceremony;
Then to the bridal chamber, leaving them
Behind.

Exit all—End.

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